

Remember, small groups are primarily for growing closer relationships with other believers. We can learn wonderful things in this environment but keep relationships first.

- **The Effective and Productive Life: 8 Biblical Steps to Reaching Your Full Potential.**
- **This Week: Step 1 – Faith**
- Not so much a “self-help” series, but a “the tools you need to answer the call” series.
- An Inconvenient Truth: God expects us to get the job done!!
  - You’re not just a forgiven sinner, but you’re called to be an active servant of God!
  - This is a very common theme of Jesus. For ex: Parables of Talents, Minas, sower, 11<sup>th</sup> hr, fig tree, and The Great Commission, Rich Young Ruler, etc.
  - Let’s go with **John 15:1-4.**
    - Two options: cut off or pruned! Pruning is good!!
    - The Point: God expects us to make a difference for His Kingdom!!
      - Freely receive so you can freely give!!
    - Spiritual draft dodgers. God is not ok with that.
  - Are you properly motivated? I hope so!
- Good News! There is a wonderful 8 step approach to success in this area outlined in 2 Peter 1:1-11!
  - I like clear expectations and clear directions on how to meet those expectations.
  - God expects you to make a difference. This series covers the clear directions for being successful in making a difference for God’s Kingdom.
    - Now, there are principles that need to be applied not specific tasks. Which are you more comfortable with? Principles that you need to apply or a list of specific tasks? Why?
  - It can be done! We are destined to succeed! But it will take a strong effort.
- **2 Peter 1:1-11**
- What are the promises in these verses?
  - You have been given all you need – **verse 3**
  - To participate in the divine nature – **verse 4**
  - You will be productive and effective – **verse 8**
  - You will never fall – **verse 10**
  - You will receive a rich welcome – **verse 11**
- Does this happen automatically?
  - Make every effort – **verse 5**
    - This is available, but we have to make every effort to attain it.
    - Promises in the Bible come with responsibilities.
    - If you want the promises here, there are 8 things you need to make part of your life. But you can do it!! In fact it is what you are destined for!
- What if you don’t do these things?
  - You are nearsighted and blind and you have forgotten something – **verse 9**
- It all starts with FAITH.
  - This is the thing that gets added to. Faith in God is the beginning.
  - What is faith? **Hebrews 11:1** and **Hebrews 11:6.**
  - Faith is when you believe that God exists, that He is good, that He knows best, that you can trust Him, that His ways are the right ways, etc.
  - Faith grows. It isn’t just a yes or no, but to what degree.
    - **2 Peter 1:8** of our reading: “increasing measure.”
    - **Mark 9:24** – “I do believe, help me overcome my unbelief!”
      - Maybe that is where you are at right now.
      - This guy did the smart thing, he asked Jesus for help. Then he received the promise that had eluded him. Ask Jesus for help!
  - Pray for each other before you finish up!