



“ Purpose Driven Life” – Week 6

Introduction:

1. I hope you’ve been enjoying our study entitled:

* *Grace for a Purpose Driven Life*

Note: Based on the book, A Purpose Driven Life

2. Our goal has been to tie this into a package we all need: : *Enjoying God’s Grace!*

Input: What has impacted you the most so far from our study of this subject?

I. What Makes God Smile?

A. God smiles when we LOVE Him supremely - Like David in Acts 13:2

- Acts 13:22 "After He had removed him, He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I HAVE FOUND DAVID the son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will.'

B. God smiles when we TRUST Him completely.

- Communicates our faith in Him and what we believe about Him

C. God smiles when we OBEY Him wholeheartedly.

D. God smiles when we PRAISE [for Who He is] and THANK [what He’s done] Him continually.

E. God smiles when we use our GIFTS and ABILITIES.

II. The Heart of Worship

* The heart of worship is surrender to God’s authority and His will in our lives

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- The focus of our study today is: ***Becoming Best Friends with God!***

I. Our Relationship with God Began at Creation – Gen. 1 & 2

- Our relationship with God starts back in Gen. 1:26 when God said, “Let Us make man in Our image and in Our Likeness”

- The idea of God being our Friend (no guilt or fear, delighting in each other) unhindered by sin – is seen in the Garden of Eden BEFORE the fall!

> That was the beginning of God establishing a relationship with man

- One of the reason’s God did that was to demonstrated His glory and to show grace to man!

- Since Creation, the Bible speaks about the various types of relationship we have w/ God:

Input: What are the various relationships the Bible describes that we have with God?

God is my _____.

✓ Creator – Maker – Lord – Master – Judge – Redeemer – Father – Savior – Friend!

> But then comes Gen. 3:

II. Our Relationship with God was Affected by the Fall – Gen. 3

Input: What did Adam and Eve DO to demonstrate the effects of the curse of sin on their relationship with God?

⇒ hid in the bushes – wanted to get away from God;

⇒ excuses – became afraid of God;

⇒ blame shifted – actually attacked their Friend “the woman YOU gave me” – i.e. an attack on God, not just the woman!

Point: Man’s relationship to God was marred from that point on -- after that point, only a few people in the OT had the privilege of a friendship with God!

- Moses & Abraham – were called ‘friends of God’
- Enoch walked with God
- Noah found grace (favor) in the eyes of the Lord

* The majority of the OT focuses on the fear of God

* Example: Priest entering the Holy of Holies once a year, a rope tied to his waist, bells around the hem of his robe – if entered in without making a sacrifice for his sin, God would kill him – the bells would stop, then no one could go in after him or they would be killed as well!

III. Our Relationship with God Was Renewed in Jesus Christ.

- Jesus made our friendship with the Godhead possible!

- The old hymn says, “What a friend we have in Jesus,” but actually . . .

- Now we are able to enjoy friendship and fellowship with all three persons of the Trinity:

- Father – 1 John 1:3 **what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.**
- Son – 1 Corinthians 1:9 **God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**
- Holy Spirit – 2 Corinthians 13:14 **The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.**

IV. Our Relationship with God is one of Friendship!

- John 15 makes that clear:

- John 15:15 **"No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."**

A. The Definition of a Friend

Input: How would you define a friend?

'friend' = a close, trusted relationship (not a casual acquaintance)

> The same word used to refer to the best man at a wedding:

- John 3:29 **"He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice."**

"The word also refers to a king's inner circle of intimate, trusted friends. In royal courts, servants must keep their distance from the king, but the inner circle of trust friends enjoy close contact, direct access, and confidential information." – p. 86

- Jeremiah 9:23 **Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; 24 but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.**

B. Ways to Develop That Friendship

Input: If you are going to develop a friendship with God, what are you going to have to do?

1. I need to be engaged in constant conversation.

Song: *My Friend Jesus*

Jesus is, my best friend; I can always go to Him

Tell Him everything, I'm dreaming of.

My Friend Jesus, whom I love.

- Paul stated it this way:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:17 **Pray without ceasing.**

- We tend to think that real prayer only occurs with out heads bowed, eyes closed, and maybe even down on our knees!

- That's NOT true – we can pray ANYTIME, ANYWHERE, ANY POSITION, ANY OCCASION, for ANY REASON!

Input: What are some examples of sentence prayers that we can pray to God?

- "You are with me."
- "Lord, help me!" – Peter's prayer – try leaving out any word in that prayer!!
- I need your help."
- "I'm depending on you."
- "I want to know you."
- "I belong to you."
- "Help me trust you."
- "I need your grace."

- There is one place where God wants us to come, ALL THE TIME!

- Hebrews 4:16 **Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**

Input: How has prayer helped you to grow in your relationship with God?

2. I need to be engaged in continual meditation of His Word!

“While you cannot spend all day studying the Bible, you can think about it throughout the day, recalling verses you have read or memorized and mulling them over in your mind. Meditation is often misunderstood as some difficult, mysterious ritual practiced by isolated monks and mystics. But meditation is simply focused thinking – a skill anyone can learn and use anywhere.” – p. 90

- We can meditate on a number of things related to God:

- Psalm 1:2 **But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.**
- Psalm 63:6 **When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches,**
- Psalm 77:12 **I will meditate on all Your work and muse on Your deeds.**
- Psalm 119:148 **My eyes anticipate the night watches, that I may meditate on Your word.**
- Psalm 19:14 **Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.**

Input: What can we do to remind ourselves to think about God and to talk to Him more often throughout the day?

3. I must choose to be honest with God.

- Friends are honest with each other

- Solomon put it this way:

- Proverbs 27:6 **Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.**

- Friends are willing to tell their friends the truth (even to ‘wound’ them if necessary)

- But friends also aren’t afraid to open up and share what’s really on their heart – failures, fears, frustrations, goals, desires, etc.

“Genuine friendship is built on disclosure.” – p. 94

Input: What keeps us from being honest/open in our relationship with God? Others?

4. I must choose to obey God in faith.

“Every time you trust God’s wisdom and do whatever he says, even when you don’t understand it, you deepen your friendship with God. We don’t normally think of obedience as a characteristic of friendship; that’s reserved for relationships with a parent or the boss or a superior officer, not a friend. However, Jesus made it clear that obedience is a

condition of intimacy with God. He said, "You are my friends if you do what I command." – p. 95

Input: When is it the hardest for you to obey?

- > when you can't see the end result – you don't know the outcome
- > i.e. you have to live/obey by faith!

5. I must choose to value what God values.

- This is what friends do – they care about what is important to the other person

Input: What does God care about?

- ✓ His glory
- ✓ People – He sent His Son to die for them
- ✓ His Word – He gave it to us
- ✓ Love – it's the 1st and 2nd greatest commandments

6. I must desire friendship with God more than anything else.

- **Philippians 3:10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

"The truth is—you are as close to God as you choose to be. Intimate friendship with God is a choice, not an accident. You must intentionally seek it. Do you really want it—more than anything? What is it worth to you? Is it worth giving up other things? Is it worth the effort of developing the habits and skills required?" – p. 98

Q: What are pressing toward? What are you striving to achieve?

- **Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.**

Q: What is keeping you from developing that friendship with God that He really wants

- Close by commenting on the problem at the church at Ephesus – READ Rev. 1:1-7

