

40 Weeks of Purpose

Week 11

Becoming Best Friends with God

POINT TO MEDITATE ABOUT FROM LAST WEEK:

The Heart of Worship is Surrender.

Surrender is such a hard word for us... I've been wanting to reword it all week long. "Giving your life up to God." "Agreeing to do God's Will and not your own." And then it hit me... I think a very big part of it is accepting it for what it is. You have to SURRENDER to God and His will. It's not a simple, academic, intelligent response. It is an emotional, gut-wrenching reaction. **SURRENDER!**

VERSE TO MEMORIZE FROM LAST WEEK:

"Surrender your whole being to God." – Romans 6:13

What parts? Which days? Which part of the day?

Your Whole Being!

QUESTION TO CONSIDER FROM LAST WEEK:

What area of my life am I holding back from God?

What part of my Whole Being, am I not giving to God? What part of my family? What part of my personal life? My work life? What part of my finances? My Schedule.

- God wants to be your best friend
 - Do you ever think about it that way?
- We think of God as our:
 - Creator
 - Maker
 - Lord

- Master
- Father
- But God also wants to be our friend
- In the Garden of Eden we see the kind of intimate relationship that he enjoyed with Adam and Eve
 - No Rituals
 - No Ceremonies
 - No Religion
- We were made by God to enjoy that kind of a loving relationship, but after the fall we were separated from God
- A few people in the Old Testament had the privilege of friendship with God.
 - Moses was called a Friend of God
 - Abraham was called a Friend of God
 - David was called a man after God's own heart
 - Job said that God's intimate friendship blessed his house
 - Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord
 - Enoch walked with God
- But most people In the Old Testament lived in Fear of God rather than friendship
- But Jesus changed all that...
- When he died for us, the veil of the temple that symbolized our separation from God was split wide open...
- Once again opening up direct access to God for each one of us
- Romans 5:11 NLT
 - 11) So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God--all because of what our Lord Jesus Christ has done for us in making us friends of God.
- Jesus also called us friends...

- John 15:15 NIV

15) I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

- How can we understand the idea of being friends with the almighty, omnipotent, invisible, and perfect God?

- We can understand a Creator / Creation Relationship

- We are more comfortable with a Master / Servant Relationship

- We might even be able to come to grips with a Father / Child Relationship

- But what does God mean when He says that he wants to be our friend?

- By looking at the Old Testament people who were friends with God, we learn SIX secrets of friendship with God

1) We become a friend of God through constant conversation

- You will never develop a close relationship with someone by visiting them once a week

- The same is true about God...

- Friendship with God isn't built by attending meeting once a week

- It doesn't even come by praying every day

- Friendship with God is built by sharing ALL of your life's experiences with Him

- Of course, attending meeting is important, and a habit of daily prayers is important...

- But God wants more than just an appointment in your schedule book

- God wants to be included in every conversation, every problem, even every thought

- God wants us to carry on a continuous, open-ended conversation with him throughout the day

- "Praying without Ceasing" means continually conversing with God while performing our everyday tasks

- We often feel that we need to "get away" from our daily routine to "spend time with God"

- That's not what God wants from us

- Worship isn't an event to attend
 - It's a perpetual attitude
- God is with you all the time
 - No place is any closer to God than wherever you are
- Develop an appreciation for the presence of God
 - Force yourself to think about God at different times throughout your day
 - Train your mind to remember God in all that you do
- Sometimes you will sense God's presence and many times you won't
 - Don't worry if you don't experience His presence, that isn't the point
 - We don't praise God to feel good, but to do good
- Our goal is not a feeling, but a continual awareness of the reality that God is always present
 - Our goal is develop a lifestyle of worship

2) We become a friend of God through continual meditation

- Another way to establish a friendship with God is to think about His word throughout the day
- This is called meditation...
 - Meditation ISN'T some mystical practice of clearing your mind of all thoughts
- Meditation is the opposite...
 - It is focusing your thoughts on the Word of God
- When you think about a problem over and over, that's called Worry
 - When you think about God's Word over and over, that's called Meditation
- It is impossible to be God's friend without knowing what He says
 - You can't love God unless you know Him
 - You can't know God without knowing His word
- * You can't spend the whole day reading the Bible

- You can spend the whole day thinking about the Word of God
 - Recalling the verses you read that morning and mulling them over in your mind
- The Man after God's own heart explained it well...
- Psalm 119:97 NIV
 - 97) Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.

The other FOUR SECRETS are in Lesson 12