

40 Weeks of Purpose

Week 12

Developing Your Friendship with God

3) We become a friend of God by choosing to be honest with God

- The first building block of any deep relationship is complete honesty
 - The same is true with God
- We need to be honest about our faults and feelings
- God doesn't expect you to be perfect...
 - But He does insist on complete honesty
- None of the Friends of God in the Bible were perfect
 - Every one of the Friends of God were honest about their feelings
 - Often complaining, second-guessing, accusing and arguing with their God
- God doesn't seem to be bothered by frankness, He seems to encourage it
- God listened to Abraham question and challenge Him over Sodom
- God listened patiently to David many accusations in the Psalms of unfairness, betrayal and abandonment.
- God didn't get upset with Jeremiah when he claimed that God had tricked him
- Job was allowed to vent his bitterness during his ordeal
- What you may think is Audacity, God sees as Authenticity
- God gets bored with predictable, pious clichés...
 - God wants to see your passionate honest feelings
- To be God's friend, you have to share your true feelings with Him
 - Not what you think He wants to hear you say

- Every single one of God's closest friends... Moses, David, and Abraham included... all had battles with Doubt
 - Instead of masking their misgivings with pious clichés, they voiced them openly and candidly
- Expressing doubt is open the first step toward the next level of intimacy with God

4) We become a friend of God by choosing to obey God in Faith

- Every time you do what God says, even though you don't understand, you develop your friendship with God
- We don't normally think of obedience as a character of friendship, but Jesus made it clear

- John 15:14 NIV

14) You are my friends if you do what I command.

- We obey God, not out of duty or obligation, but because we love him, and we trust that He knows what is best for us
 - We follow God out of gratitude for what He has done for us
- We shouldn't obey out of compulsion or guilt or fear of punishment
 - Because we have been forgiven, we obey
- True friendship isn't passive, it acts
 - When God asks us to do something, our love for Him motivates us to obey
- God isn't looking just for "Great Things", He wants us to obey Him in the small things
 - Telling the truth, being kind, and encouraging others pleases God
- 1st Samuel 15:22 NIV

22) But Samuel replied: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.

5) We become a friend of God by choosing to value what He values

- Friends care about what is important to the other person
 - The more we become friends with God, the more we will care about what is important to Him

- What does God care about the most?
 - God wants all of his lost children to be found
- The most dearest thing to God is the death of His son
 - He wants us to share the news about that death with those around us
- Friends of God tell their friends about God

6) We become a friend of God by desiring friendship with God more than anything else

- Look at how David felt,
- Psalm 27:4 CEV
 - 4) I ask only one thing, LORD: Let me live in your house every day of my life to see how wonderful you are and to pray in your temple.
- God's friends have always been passionate about Him
- Look at how Paul passionately describes his feelings about Christ:
- Philippians 3:10 AMP
 - 10) For my determined purpose is that I may know Him, that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly, and that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection which it exerts over believers, and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed in spirit into His likeness even to His death, in the hope.
- We may have been passionate at one point, but feel that it's burned out...
- Pain is the fuel of passion
 - Pain is God's way of arousing us from lethargy
- Your problems are not permanent, they are simply a wake-up call from God
- God is mad at you, He's mad about you
 - He will do whatever it takes to bring you back into fellowship with Him
- But, there is an easier way to reignite your passion...
 - Ask God to give it to you, and keep on asking until you get it

- Look what God told the exiles in Jeremiah:

- Jeremiah 29:13-14 MSG

- 13) “When you come looking for me, you’ll find me. “Yes, when you get serious about finding me and want it more than anything else,
- 14) I’ll make sure you won’t be disappointed,” decrees God. “I’ll turn things around for you. I’ll bring you back from all the countries into which I drove you” decrees God, “bring you home to the place from which I sent you off into exile. You can count on it.

POINT TO MEDITATE ABOUT THIS WEEK:

I’m as close to God as I choose to be

VERSE TO MEMORIZE THIS WEEK:

“Draw close to God, and He will draw close to you.” – James 4:8

QUESTION TO CONSIDER THIS WEEK:

What changes do I need to make in my life to be closer to God?