

DAVID'S MEN

SEEKING THE HEART OF GOD



Problem 5: Selfishness

Treasure: DISCOVER JOY

Key: Love Others

Have you ever helped someone out and felt terribly proud of yourself? Have you ever wanted to reach out to someone to assist them but ultimately chose not to because they smelled bad? Have you ever felt moved to give money to someone but didn't follow through because you had something else you "needed" to put that money into? Have you ever had the chance to participate in a service project but didn't sign up because you had something else you wanted to do? Chances are you have made decisions like these several times over the years. Now you have to ask yourself this question...did you make these decisions out of your own selfishness? Were you and the things you wanted more important than the call Christ gave us to reach out to others?

Mark 12:30-31 (NIV)

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

Jesus tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves. He didn't tell us to love them more than ourselves but also no less than ourselves. How do you do this? What might this kind of love look like? Why is it so hard for us to grasp?

The treasure this month is DISCOVER JOY. Notice that the treasure isn't JOY. This isn't just a matter of obtaining it, there is something that requires you to DISCOVER it. There is a very good chance that you have been looking for joy all wrong. Our culture is capitalist, consumer-based, and materialistic. That isn't a bad thing but there are negative consequences we have to deal with. Since you were a child the culture has been relentlessly teaching you that you needed material things to be happy.





The culture is always whispering in our ear: When you get better pay at work you will find joy. When you get that younger wife you have joy. That new car will bring you joy. When you get into that bigger house the whole family will be joyful. When you have a few more beers you will be joyous. Joy comes from gloating to the neighbors about having better stuff. You don't really believe that...do you?

According to the Heritage Foundation report on poverty and inequality titled: "[Air Conditioning, Cable TV, and an Xbox: What is Poverty in the United States Today?](#)"

The typical poor household in the United States has a car, air conditioning, two color televisions, cable TV (or satellite), and a DVD player, access to food and medical care, and more living space in their home than the average European.

If what the culture teaches you about material possessions bringing you happiness and the reality that American lives in great material wealth, then it is obvious that Americans should be some of the happiest people on the planet. And many times happier than people in poor countries. Are American's significantly happier than other people on the planet?

It starts becoming obvious that material possessions are not what leads to joy. Now you know why we need to **DISCOVER JOY**. Let us turn to the Bible and see what it tells us about how to DISCOVER JOY.

John 10:10 (NIV)

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

Christ came to their earth so that you could SEE GOD and experience salvation, but that wasn't the end of the story. He not only wanted to snatch you from the jaws of the adversary but also create in you a life that was filled with genuine happiness and joy.

John 15:11 (NIV)

"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."

It's not enough that you can have joy, but Jesus wants your joy to be complete. He wants genuine joy to fill all aspects of your life.

If Jesus wants joy in all aspects of your life that means you will need to purge those areas of your life that He cannot be part of. If there is sin in some aspect of your life Jesus cannot and will not give you genuine joy in that area. He cannot operate in a dirty environment. The good news is that He wants to help us to do the cleaning. If you invite Him into that situation He will not only help you work through that area, but He will then help you find a way to DISCOVER JOY to fill that empty area of your life with.



Some believe God's ultimate goal is to give us joy but that is mistaken. His ultimate goal is to be in a relationship with you. With that said God knows that joy isn't something we will experience when we reach our destination, but instead it is experienced along the journey. Relationship and joy aren't either or but instead work together. As we journey towards a deeper and more perfect relationship with our creator we experience ever deeper joy and wholeness.

John 14:15 (NIV)

"If you love me, keep my commands."

Have you ever felt that you must follow the commands of Jesus because in the when you stand before Him in judgment He will punish those who failed to measure up? That way of thinking is how the world deals with relationships. If you fail to obey you will be punished until you comply. That's not how Jesus works. He knows your going to fail, He wants you to obey Him because He loves you and knows what is best for you. He isn't threatening you, He is compassionate and doesn't want to see you hurt by doing things that will hurt you.

John 13:34 (NIV)

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

If you love Jesus then you follow His commands, and one of His commands is to love one another. There are two reasons He wants us to do this: first, we will DISCOVER JOY in our lives by loving others. Second, when we love others we are representing Jesus. In fact, loving others often directly leads them to an invitation to SEE GOD, learning that leads to FINDING FREEDOM, promotes our LOVING GOD deeper, and service that allows us to EXPERIENCE HEALING.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Once again you can see joy and relationship side by side in this verse. When you have a relationship and joy you find yourself overflowing with gratitude. How you feel will no longer be something you are trying to make happen, but it will be something that is given to you.

Up to this point, the focus has been on "Love the Lord your God with all your heart...". But that is missing half of what you were told to do. You also need to "Love your neighbor as yourself". The key to DISCOVER JOY is love others, that includes God and every person you come into contact every day.





When you think about LOVE GOD its all about relationship. Loving God isn't something we say we agree with and then move on. It is an active and continuous process that may start shallow and gradually grow deeper. Is that how you are loving others?

When it comes to the people who look unpleasant, act wrong, talk too loud, smell bad, love the wrong people, mumble to themselves, act self-important, or even hate God you may be tempted to agree that God loves them so you do too. But how many of "these kinds of people" do you live in loving relationship with?

Each of these people bears God's image. God is busy chasing after them trying to love them. He has an amazing desire for them to SEE GOD and He has invited them to join in relationship with Him. But you are His hands and feet, you are His representatives on earth. Are you listening to Him when He tells you to "love that person for Me"?

When you were one of those people, He came into this fallen world so that He could invite you into a relationship. He allowed Himself to be tortured and nailed to a cross because you couldn't bear the burden. He loved you when you had nothing to offer but pain and rejection. Is it so much to ask that you work towards loving others in some way that reflects His love for you?

Everybody Always

The title of this months book is "*Everybody Always: Becoming Love in a World Full of Setbacks and Difficult People*". In this book, Bob Goff recounts story after story of encountering people who were difficult to love. Not every story is an amazing success but in each experience, God taught him something that you can learn from.

Bob introduces the idea that people who are trying to love others better are themselves "becoming love". As we become love we are becoming more like God. By loving others you are in-fact loving God. If you're a father then you know, when someone loves your children then they are loving you.

You will get the distinct impression Bob is a guy who smiles constantly. He has seen some very tough times and some dark places but he somehow fills each situation with love and joy, which in turn speaks volumes about Jesus. He follows Jesus into the most amazing situations. His love laden adventures take him from a "croc drop" in Alabama, a family parade at his home attended by hundreds, into President Obama's Oval Office, driving a limo for a retiring limo driver, on a walkie-talkie to neighbor battling cancer, and over Uganda to teach witch doctors how to read.

Bob is a living example of loving like Jesus loves. Even when it is uncomfortable, unfamiliar, and possibly even dangerous. He shows a whimsical yet selfless kind of love that carries a type of impact that a self-centered "I feel better about me" type of love could never provide.



Current Month Assignments

- Read *Everybody Always* by Bob Goff and prepare a book summary to share with the group. We will do this for each book.
 - The summary should be one page with the following info:
 - List the big ideas.
 - List your key takeaways.
 - List how you will apply to your life now.
 - Provide a copy for each guy at the meeting.
- Complete the **Joy Word Challenge**.
 - As you read *Everybody Always* underline every “joy word” (joy, joys, joyful, and joyous) that you find (pgs. 1 - 223).
 - Using the included Joy Word Challenge Worksheet write down the prayer word, the page (or Kindle location) you find the word on.
 - Consider the word in the context of how the author is using it. Can you see how this instance of the word relates to the treasure of DISCOVER JOY? Write any comments or insights in the comments column.
 - During the meeting, the actual number will be revealed. The man who is closest to the correct number will be the challenge winner.
- Memorize the three scripture passages under Topical Memory Verses. Be prepared to quote topic – reference – verse – and brief context.
- Meet with one other guy in the group. This would be a great opportunity to practice saying your verses.

Topical Memory Verses

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