

And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."

- LUKE 10:27

FELLOWSHIP

(Start the conversation and get to know more about the people in the group. You can choose to answer one question.)

1. *What is the first thing you think about in the morning?*
2. *Where do you usually spend your rest days or weekends?*

MEDITATE AND PROCLAIM

(Scripture to be gleaned from and how we can apply the Word in our lives and encourage others to do the same)

In this series entitled "Timeout," we will talk about our purpose in life and what we need to do to refocus on that purpose. We are created to worship God. Whether it is a person, a thing or an event, we know what we value most by what takes up most of our effort, resources and time. If we do not know what or who we need to truly value most, we can easily end up "worshipping" (giving our best) to the wrong thing.

That is why we need to take occasional "timeouts" - times to refocus on what is most valuable. When we realise how valuable God is and how much He values us, we will know He is the most valuable thing - the thing worthy of our worship!

SEEK GOD FIRST

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. - MATTHEW 6:33

God is most valuable and the Bible tells us to seek Him first. "Proton" is the Greek word for first and it means not only first in chronology but also highest in value and priority. God's Word promises that when we seek God and His righteousness first, all the other things will be added to us. Most of the time, we run after the "other" things rather than pursuing God first. At other times, we continue doing

work “in the name of God and His Kingdom,” but we are doing it in our own strength and motivation. We can forget the reason why we are actually working and serving and who we are doing the work for in the first place.

The Gospel of Luke tells us the story of two sisters, Mary and Martha, and how they have chosen to seek and worship God.

And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, - LUKE 10:39-41

There is a time to sit at Jesus' feet and there is time to do the work He has called us to do. The important thing is put God first in all we do and be sensitive to His leading on what He wants us to do next. When we seek God and obey Him, it is worship.

DISCUSS: ARE YOU SEEKING GOD FIRST? HOW ARE YOU PRACTICALLY DOING IT?

LOVE GOD WITH OUR ALL

And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." - LUKE 10:27

The Bible does not only say to seek God first but also to love Him with our all. The Greek word for all is “holos” which means whole, entire and complete. To truly worship God means to love Him with all of our being. We cannot compartmentalise our love for God. Either we love Him in every facet of our lives or not. But we also have to check the motives of our hearts when we love Him. We might think we are sincerely loving God by doing things for Him but our sincerity might be in the wrong place.

Take the Apostle Paul for instance. Before he encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus, he was known as Saul, the man who persecutes believers of Christ and drags them to prison. He even approved of Stephen's execution (see Acts 8). All the while, Saul thought he was passionately loving God but actually he was

insanely persecuting Him (see Acts 9:4,5). We know we are loving God right when we wholeheartedly follow His commands and lovingly obey His Spirit's leading.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. - 1 JOHN 5:2,3

You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. - JOHN 15:14,15

DISCUSS: HOW DO YOU SHOW YOUR LOVE FOR GOD?

GOD DESERVES OUR WORSHIP

*All the nations you have made shall come
and worship before you, O Lord,
and shall glorify your name.*

*For you are great and do wondrous things;
you alone are God. - PSALM 86:9,10*

He [Jesus] is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. - HEBREWS 1:3,4

Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines worship as excellence of character, dignity and worth. God alone is worthy; He alone deserves our worship. In the book, *The Pursuit of God*, A.W. Tozer writes, "He is ETERNAL, which means that He antedates time and is wholly independent of it. Time began in Him and will end in Him. To it He pays no tribute and from it He suffers no change. He is IMMUTABLE, which means that He has never changed and can never change in any smallest measure. To change He would need to go from better to worse or from worse to better. He cannot do either, for being perfect He cannot become more perfect, and if He were to become less perfect He would be less than God. He is OMNISCIENT, which means that He knows in one free and effortless act all matter, all spirit, all relationships, all events. He has no past and He has no future. He IS, and none of the limiting and qualifying terms used of creatures can apply to Him."

Our God who is All-Powerful, All-Knowing and Ever-Present, gave what was most valuable to Him, His Only Son Jesus, to save us from sin and restore us to a loving relationship with Him. Apart from God, we are destined for death and eternal separation from Him. But through Jesus' ultimate sacrifice, we can worship God and be thankful for His amazing love and gift of eternal life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. - JOHN 3:16

but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. - ROMANS 5:8

Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." - JOHN 6:28,29

DISCUSS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOU TO GIVE GOD ALL THAT HE DESERVES?

PRAY

(Remember to do this. Pray for one another; for everyone to live out the Word and for any other specific prayer needs)

Pray that we will be able to seek God wholeheartedly and worship Him in spirit and truth (see John 4:24). Pray that we will be able to give God our all as His Holy Spirit leads and empowers us to do so.



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