

Laudium Baptist Church Easter Camp 2010

Session 1: Knowing God's love

NB: This is a personal spiritual journey and not merely an academic exercise. Be honest and personal in your meditation. Don't just look for the "right" answers. You will not be required to share any of your meditation with others.

From God's other known attributes we may learn much about his love. We can know, for instance, that because God is self-existent, his love had no beginning; because he is eternal, his love can have no end; because he is infinite, it has no limit; because he is holy, it is the quintessence of all spotless purity; because he is immense, his love is an incomprehensibly vast, bottomless, shoreless sea before which we kneel in joyful silence and from which the loftiest eloquence retreats confused and abashed.

A. W. TOZER

1) Read the following verses on God's love

Romans 5: 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life

John 13:1 - 5 It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love. The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

Isaiah 49:16 See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me.

Psalms 139:16 your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Deuteronomy 33:27 The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

Isaiah 54:10 Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

Exodus 34: 6 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness

Isaiah 40:11 He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.

Psalms 16:11 You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Zephaniah 3:17 The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing

- 2) Whilst meditating on the above verses think about how God has shown love to you personally.
- 3) The journey of our lives begins with God. When did you realise that God wanted you to journey with Him?
- 4) If you have had a problem receiving God's love what are the hindrances in your life that would prevent you from knowing God's love fully. (e.g. wrong role models, pride, hurt from authority figures, sin, etc)
- 5) God's love is expressed in his grace and forgiveness of our sins in Christ on the cross. He has offered forgiveness for every sin that you have committed. Are there any sins in your life that you are

struggling to believe that God has forgiven you of? If so confess them to God now and receive His forgiveness. 1 John 1: 9 says "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

- 6) God reaches out to us in love, He forgives us and makes us righteous so that we can be reconciled to Him and have a love relationship with Him. We have seen that He loves you. How much do you love Him?

- 7) Read Matthew 22: 37 – 38 and John 21: 15 – 17
Matthew 22:37 – 38 Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment.
John 21:15 – 17 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep

- 8) Considering that the greatest commandment that Jesus left us with is to love God what would your response to Jesus have been if He asked you the same questions that He asked Peter. Remember that Peter had told Jesus that even if everyone else denies Him that he never will. Then he denied Jesus three times. Have you let Jesus down and are finding it difficult to have a love relationship with Him again? Write down what is on your heart.

- 9) What are the hindrances in your life that hinder you from loving God (these may be the same or may be different to the hindrances to receiving God's love)?

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Session 2: Knowing yourself

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Know thyself? If I knew myself, I'd run away.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

Most of us do not like to look inside ourselves for the same reason we don't like to open a letter that has bad news.

ARCHBISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN

Self-knowledge is so critically important to us in our pursuit of God and his righteousness that we lie under heavy obligation to do immediately whatever is necessary to remove the disguise and permit our real selves to be known.

A. W. TOZER

- 1) Read Mark 14: 31; Mark 14: 43 – 52; Mark 14: 66 – 72

MK 14:31 But Peter insisted emphatically, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you."

And all the others said the same.

MK 14: 43 - 52 Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders. Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard." Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Rabbi!" and kissed him. The men seized Jesus and arrested him. Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear. "Am I leading a rebellion," said Jesus, "that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled." Then everyone deserted him and fled. A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.

MK 14:66 - 72 While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him.

"You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus," she said. But he denied it. "I don't know or understand what you're talking about," he said, and went out into the entryway. When the servant girl saw him there, she said again to those standing around, "This fellow is one of them." Again he denied it. After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, "Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean." He began to call down curses on himself, and he swore to them, "I don't know this man you're talking about." Immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times." And he broke down and wept.

- 2) Jesus' disciples all thought that they knew themselves and confidently said things that they would do things that they all later failed in. in this case they all said that they would stand with Jesus no matter what happens but when the test came they all (except John) deserted Jesus.

- 3) My Present Reality: Myself (MIRROR)

Colossians 3: 10 And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator

2 Cor.3: 18 And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

In the Mirror I see ...

What is God's truth about this?

4) My Present Reality: Burdens (STONE)

1 Peter 2: 24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

JN 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

PS 34:19 A righteous man may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all;

MT 11:28 - 30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

What are my present burdens?

Talk honestly to God about it.

5) My Present Reality: A Broken world (TILES)

PS 34:18 The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Eph 4: 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

1 John 1: 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

2 Cor 2: 15 - 16 For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one we are the smell of death; to the other, the fragrance of life. And who is equal to such a task?

What do the different pieces of tile represent for me?

Nothing is impossible for God. He can restore, heal, make whole. Let Him! Talk to Him about it.

6) My God Reality: I am Forgiven (STRING)

1JN 5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Do you have assurance that you are saved?

Are you tied to God through a living (vs. ritualistic, dead, stagnant, legalistic) relationship with Him?

7) My God Reality: I have been set free (BASIN)

Free from sin: do I live in victory over sin?

Rom 6: 6 - 7 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with," that we should no longer be slaves to sin-- because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

GAL 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Free from obstacles: What may be holding me back from full surrender to Him?

1 John 5: 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith

Freedom from burdens, worries and lies: My prayer to God about these burdens ...

Rom 8: 33 - 34 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us

1 Peter 5: 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

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Session 3: Knowing others

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The story is told of a wounded Scottish Highlander, stroking a German spiked helmet, as he lay upon a cot in a London hospital. A nurse said to him, "I suppose you killed your man?" "No, indeed," was the reply. "It was like this: he lay on the field badly wounded and bleeding, and I was in the same condition. I crawled to him and bound up his wounds; he did the same for me. I knew no German, and he knew no English; so I thanked him by just smiling. He thanked me by smiling back. By way of a token I handed him my cap, while he handed me his helmet. Then, lying side by side, we suffered together in silence till we were picked up by the ambulance squad. No, I didn't kill my man."

- 1) Read the following verses: Matthew 22: 39; Romans 12: 9 – 16; 1 Corinthians 10: 27 – 33

Matthew 22: 39 And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.

RO 12: 9 – 16 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

1CO 10:27 - 33 If some unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. But if anyone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, both for the sake of the man who told you and for conscience' sake-- the other man's conscience, I mean, not yours. For why should my freedom be judged by another's conscience? If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for? So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God-- even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved

- 2) We are called to love others – whether believers or unbelievers, friends or enemies.
- 3) List all the Christians that you have served in love or been a blessing to in any way during the last 6 months.
- 4) Now list all the non-Christians that you have served in love or been a blessing to in any way in the last 6 months
- 5) Read the following verses:

Ephesians 6: 18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

RO 15:5 May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus

RO 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

EPH 6:19 Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel

ECC 4:9 - 12 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie

down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken

6) My journey companions (STARS)

As I write the names of my journey companions, is there something I would like to say to or do for them?

As I put stars for those that influenced me, in what ways have they influenced me? Thank God for each one of them and if they are still around, pray that God will continue to use them in others' lives.

7) Do you have hindrances in your life that prevents you from having friends?

Make a list of people who have hurt you and you need to forgive.

Make a list of people you have hurt and you need to reconcile with.

8) Do you think that God is happy with all your relationships:

Family: Father, mother, brothers, sisters, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, others

Friends

Church members

Work colleagues

School/university/college students

9) If Jesus saw what you were thinking about each of them would he be pleased?

If so, why/why not?

If He would not be pleased what do you think He would want you to do?

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Session 4: Knowing your destiny

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A man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder--a waif, a nothing, a no man. Have a purpose in life, and, having it, throw such strength of mind and muscle into your work as God has given you.

Thomas Carlyle.

"More men fail through lack of purpose than lack of talent." Billy Sunday.

Christians without goals are a little like Alice in the fairy tale Alice in Wonderland. In a conversation between her and the Cheshire Cat, Alice asked, "Would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?" "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the cat. "I don't much care where," said Alice. "Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the cat.

Source Unknown.

1) Read the following verses:

Jeremiah 29: 11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Leviticus 26: 12 I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people

Hosea 14:9 Who is wise? He will realize these things. Who is discerning? He will understand them. The ways of the LORD are right; the righteous walk in them, but the rebellious stumble in them.

Philippians 3:14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 1: 18 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints

Isaiah 6:8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"
And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

John 15: 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name

2) My God Reality: I have Purpose and Direction (SAND)

3) My walk with God is ...

4) Do I listen to Him and stop often enough to find His purpose and direction?

5) **Romans 12:1-2** Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

According to Romans 12: 1 – 2 there are some conditions (underlined) that we need to fulfil before we can know what God's will is. If you are struggling to know what God's will is for your life ask yourself whether you are fulfilling the conditions.

6) If there are known hindrances in your life to submitting to God's purpose in your life write them down.

- 7) **Ecclesiastes 3: 11-14** He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil--this is the gift of God. I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that men will revere him.

Destiny is set in the heart of man. God has given you the gifts and enjoyment of those gifts so that we "will revere him".

What is it that you are good at doing and enjoy doing? It is possible that these are in line with God's purposes for your life.

- 8) Imagine, after you've died, you're looking at your tombstone.
What would you like to see written on it? It could be just one word like "Statesman" or something longer like "He/she made a difference". Write down your answer.
- 9) Imagine you're in Heaven and reading through the "Book of Life". Next to everyone's name there is a 50 word description of their life. What would you like yours to say? Write down your answer.