

We are living in challenging times with many 'experts' through uncharted waters. We may not know some things, but the truth we have, as consolidated and central in our hearts – the good and right we do know, will hold us up and will always prevail; the truth/what's right will always see the heart and will of God come through. Believers in Christ are set apart by this – the Word of truth – this is what identifies us as we stay right in the middle of the Potter's wheel, the sanctification process can continue 'as Christ is formed in us. Galatians 4:19

God's heart and will – greatest commandment is to love Him – with everything, and the second is like it – we see this as some of the last words Jesus spoke before He departed. The love He has poured out – the passion – His love manifested/demonstrated on the Cross that we have the ability to again be a friend of God; this is His heartbeat.

Quotes from the book:

Purpose Driven Life

“But the most shocking truth is this: Almighty God yearns to be your friend” (p85)

“God deeply desires that we know Him intimately. In fact, He planned the universe and orchestrated history, including the details of our lives, so that we could become His friends” (p87)

“Knowing and loving God is our greatest privilege, and being known and loved is God's greatest pleasure” (p87)

“Friendship with God is built by sharing all your life experiences with Him” (p87)

“Praying without ceasing' means conversing with God while shopping, driving, working, or performing any other everyday tasks” (p88)

“The key to friendship with God, he (Brother Lawrence) said, is not changing what you do, but changing your attitude toward what you do. What you normally do for yourself, you begin doing for God, whether it is eating, bathing, working, relaxing, or taking out the trash” (p88)

“The Bible tells us to 'pray all the time.' How is it possible to do this? One way is to use 'breath prayers' throughout the day, as many Christians have done for centuries” (p89)

“We don't praise God to feel good, but to do good. Your goal is not feeling, but a continual awareness of the reality that God is always present. That is the lifestyle of worship” (p90)

“It is impossible to be God's friend apart from knowing what He says. You can't love God unless you know Him, and you can't know Him without knowing His Word” (p90)

“But meditation is simply focused thinking – a skill anyone can learn and use anywhere” (p90)

“If you know how to worry, you already know how to meditate” (p90)

“The more you meditate on God's Word, the less you will have to worry about:” (p90)

“Prayer lets you speak to God; meditation lets God speak to you. Both are essential to becoming a friend of God” (p91)

If we know how to worry, we know how to meditate. The Potter's hand is forming us – our part is to surrender. Our part is to understand what 'surrender' truly is – to yield to Him; His will not ours. Jonah's story illustrated the process of surrender; Romans 12:1-2 speaks of us 'offering ourselves' 'spiritual act of worship' – staying in the middle of the Potter's wheel.

First purpose in our life is to Love God. **Second purpose** in our life is to love people.

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”³⁷ Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment.³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” Matthew 22:36-40

We love the Lord our God with all our heart, our affection; with all our soul and mind, our attention and with all our strength, our ability. We love humanity like God does. According to these verses, this frames everything. Matthew 13:14 explains that if we love Him, we will obey Him; simple obedience develops from this love received and expressed; the sanctification process grows our ability to love.

See the bookends in the Great commission. Verse 18: With all the **authority** of Jesus, we have this charge and verse 20; the Author and the Finisher, His **presence** with us to the end; Jesus has sown every ounce of His life into us, His disciples. God has the beginning and He has the end.

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:16-20

Our second purpose; our part in the middle – of these bookends – is to make disciples; to understand that there is no one outside the scope of God's unconditional love; as described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸ Love never fails.

God's authority is with us to love people. God's presence is with us to love people.

These last words of Jesus are the deepest and most precious.

We see in this, the second part of the great commandment, demonstrated in the great commission. Why 'baptism' in the middle? To 'baptise' is to fully immerse, submerge, sink – to be surrendered to the heart and will of God, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is a picture of the death and resurrection of Christ; that I no longer live, this is a demonstration of someone who has made a decision to follow Christ (de (off) – cise (cut) / has cut off somethings to follow Christ, a simplified life) – a surrendered life is a life who has surrendered to Christ and to His will. Galatians 2:20. It is a picture of coming into God, into His kingdom, the family of God, united into the Body of Christ, being identified as a disciple (a learner) of Christ ... a disciple of His love.

His disciples had not fully understood the depth of this but grew to – 'neither Jew, gentile, slaver, free, male female...'

Loving God and loving people needs surrender; we have an opportunity to run with the amazing love of God; all the associated emotions yes but running alongside clear choice, intention, decision to love all people like Christ; to look a little like Him, who loved us first. 1 John 4:19

Loving God – we are disciples

Loving people – we are disciplined lovers

That is the purpose of every believer, and always will be.