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A M E T H O D I S T C H U R C H

Homegroup material

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**WHAT IS
YOUR
GREATEST
DESIRE?**

6.6.2010

I. Introductory Discussion Questions

1. What stood out for you most about the “What’s your greatest desire?” Sermon on Sunday?
2. Take some time to think about and write a list of 10 things you want to do before you die. Share some of these desires with the group.
3. Your greatest desires (or absence of desires) *will* have ramifications on your life. How do you think we can make sure that our greatest desire is for God?
4. Read and reflect on Psalm 84:

Psalm 84:1-12:

“To the Chief Musician. On Gittith. A Psalm for the sons of Korah. How lovely are Your tabernacles, O LORD of Hosts! My soul longs, yea, even faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh shout for joy to the living God. Even the sparrow has found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself where she may lay her young, Your altars, O LORD of Hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are they who dwell in Your house; they will still praise You. Selah.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in You; Your ways are in their hearts. Passing through the valley of weeping, they will make it a fountain; the early rain also covers it with blessings. They go from strength to strength, appearing in Zion before God. O LORD, the God of Hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

Behold, O God, our shield, and look on the face of Your anointed. For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly. O LORD of Hosts, blessed is the man who trusts in You.”.

- a) What stands out for you most about this Psalm?
 - b) What do you think cultivated the Psalmists’ intense desire for God?
5. If you had to rate your desire to be in God’s presence and to please Him right now, where would you place yourself on a scale from 1-10 (with 1 being not at all and 10 being a great, burning, intense desire)?

II. When God is our greatest desire, you are secure in your IDENTITY

1. How do you think God sees you?
2. How would you describe your identity in Christ?

Read & reflect on the following Scriptures:

Romans 8 vs 14-17:

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption by which we cry, Abba, Father! The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And if we are children, then we are heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; so that if we suffer with Him, we may also be glorified together.”

Psalms 139:1-24:

“LORD, you have examined me and you know me. You know everything I do; from far away you understand all my thoughts. You see me, whether I am working or resting; you know all my actions. Even before I speak, you already know what I will say. You are all around me on every side; you protect me with your power. Your knowledge of me is too deep; it is beyond my understanding. Where could I go to escape from you? Where could I get away from your presence? If I went up to heaven, you would be there; if I lay down in the world of the dead, you would be there. If I flew away beyond the east or lived in the farthest place in the west, you would be there to lead me, you would be there to help me. I could ask the darkness to hide me or the light around me to turn into night, but even darkness is not dark for you, and the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are the same to you. You created every part of me; you put me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because you are to be feared; all you do is strange and wonderful. I know it with all my heart. When my bones were being formed, carefully put together in my mother's womb, when I was growing there in secret, you knew that I was there--- you saw me before I was born. The days allotted to me had all been recorded in your book, before any of them ever began. O God, how difficult I find your thoughts; how many of them there are! If I counted them, they would be more than the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you. O God, how I wish you would kill the wicked! How I wish violent people would leave me alone! They say wicked things about you; they speak evil things against your name. O LORD, how I hate those who hate you! How I despise those who rebel against you! I hate them with a total hatred; I regard them as my enemies. Examine me, O God, and know my mind; test me, and discover my thoughts. Find out if there is any evil in me and guide me in the everlasting way.”

3. What does insight does Psalm 139 give you as to your identity in Christ?
4. What do you think holds us back from understanding and living out our identities in Christ?
5. The *Looking Glass Theory* refers to the idea that people will become what the most important person their lives think they are. Considering who you are becoming at present, what do you think it says about who is the most important person in you life?
6. How do you think we can learn to only turn to God to validate us and give us identity? What are some of the other things that you are allowing to shape your identity at present?
7. What do you think it means to be a citizen of God's city / kingdom?
8. Read and reflect on the following scriptures and discuss what it practically means to be "in the world but not of it."

Philippians 3 vs 20:

"We, however, are citizens of heaven, and we eagerly wait for our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come from heaven."

John 17 vs 14-16:

"I have given them Your Word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not pray for You to take them out of the world, but for You to keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

iii. When God is our greatest desire, you will be safe in UNCERTAINTY

1. God does not often remove us from our difficult circumstances, but He does promise to use all things to our good (Romans 8:28) and to be with us through our trials. How do you think making God our greatest desire makes us safe in uncertainty?
2. Read and reflect on Isaiah 43 vs 1-2. When all we truly desire is God, we will never be disappointed because He promises us that He will never leave or forsake us (Hebrews 13 vs 5).

Isaiah 43 vs 1-2:

“But now so says the LORD who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel; Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned; nor shall the flame kindle on you.”

IV. When God is our greatest desire, you will be satisfied with your DESTINY

Read & reflect on the following Scriptures:

- **Psalm 37 vs 4:**

“Delight yourself also in the LORD and He shall give you the desires of your heart.”

- **Psalm 84 vs 11:**

“The LORD will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.”

- **Psalm 107 vs 28-31:**

“And they cry to the LORD in their trouble, and He brings them out of their troubles. He makes the storm calm, so that its waves are still. And they are glad because they are quiet; so He brings them to their desired haven. Let them praise Jehovah for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the sons of man!”

When we truly desire God, we can trust that we will have a destiny that includes God’s significant purposes, His unfathomable power and His prosperity.

1. Do you feel like you are fulfilling God’s purposes for your life? Why or why not?
2. What is one thing you can do practically this week to ensure that you are finding and fulfilling God’s purposes for you?
3. What are you doing right now for which you need the power of God working in and through you?
4. Do you think the power of God is being displayed in and through you?

5. How do you think we reconcile God's promise not to withhold any good thing from those who honour and serve Him with the difficulty and pain we often face?

V. Call to action

Discussion:

1. What will we do with what we have discovered in this session?
2. How will we hold each other accountable to this?

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION:

- What is the one thing you can do practically this week to ensure that you make God the greatest desire in your life or increase your desire for Him?
- How can you better understand and live out your identity in Christ?
- How can you practically practice "delighting" in God this week? (Psalm 37:4)