

Less of Me and More of You, God: Fasting and Prayer Points this Week.

This week, in prayer and fasting we will be asking God to help us to be less self-focused and more aware of the needs around us. As our Pastor so eloquently pointed out on Sunday, we as mere mortals tend to focus more on ourselves and our feelings than anything else. This is not always a conscious process, sometimes the actions that we think are kind and magnanimous are self-serving, and we don't even realise that we are self-obsessed.

In John 3:30, John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus makes one of the most profound statements found in scripture. To provide some context, John is a few years into his ministry. His disciples, who had been following his slightly unorthodox teachings, were expressing their concerns that there was a new teacher in town. They had heard that many were following Jesus and were being baptised by Him. I imagine that their concerns were tinged with worry, wondering if John's gifts and ministry would become irrelevant. They probably thought they were protecting John. But John the Baptist understood something that was not revealed by flesh and blood. He responded by saying, "He must increase, but I must decrease".

John the Baptist was a model for us of how to exalt God and humble ourselves. This is obviously an important characteristic in God's sight. God opposes the proud but gives grace to those who are humble (James 4:6). When we get out of the way and let God accomplish what He intends, then so much more than we can imagine is accomplished. On the other hand, when we step in and try to help God along, we may find ourselves working against what God's desires in our lives and in His kingdom.

Philanthropist John Lubbock coined the phrase, "What we see depends mainly on what we look for." In other words, the more we focus on ourselves the more we see ourselves; the more we focus on our needs, the more we see our needs; the more we focus on what we lack, the more we see lack. But the other part of that truth is the more we focus on God, the more we see Him in our lives. The more we focus on others, the more aware we become of their needs and how we can serve.

The concept of less of me and more of Him is not a diminishment of our worth and purpose, rather, it is an elevation of our souls as we yield our lives to His Glory. In our surrender, we can find rest, because the word of God reminds us in St Matt. 11:30 that "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light".

GETTING STARTED

Read St John 3:22-30

1. What is the setting described in the passage, and what activities are taking place? **John 3:22-24**
2. What is the dispute that arises? **John 3:25**

3. How does John the Baptist's response reflect a joyful surrender to God's sovereign plan, especially considering the decrease in his popularity and the increase in Jesus' following?
John 3:30

LET'S GET PERSONAL

Get your pad of paper and reflect on the following:

1. In what areas of your life do you find it most challenging to embrace the principle of "Less of Me and More of Him"?
2. Are there specific desires, ambitions, or plans that you struggle to surrender to God's will? Take a moment to reflect on why it may be difficult to release control in these areas.
3. Consider a recent challenge or difficulty you faced. How did your response reflect either a self-centered approach or a surrender to God's guidance? What could you do differently in the future to align more with His will?
4. Reflect on moments in your life when you felt a deep sense of God's presence. How did your posture of surrender contribute to those experiences? How can you cultivate that surrender in your daily life?

Have a great week, please remember that there is a noon prayer meeting on Tuesday on Zoom for those who can make it and an in-person prayer meeting on Thursday at 7:00 PM.