

The Glory of God

The AIM of Discipleship (Pt. 1)

March 6, 2022

John 15:1-16 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹

These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

¹² “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

Discipleship Understood Through a Vine!

v. 5 ...I am the Vine, You are the Branches ...

v. 1 ...***My Father is the Vinedresser***

...the vinedresser is the attending Gardner!

...He's got an agenda; he has something in

mind; he has a strategy that is seeking to

accomplish this! ...THIS is a CRITICAL INSIGHT

for Today's Person seeking "Spirituality"! God is

not a passive and dispassionate force in our

universe! He's Got an Opinion! He Wants

Something! He is Steering and Influencing and

Ordaining the Things that Exist toward a

Particular End!

- Branch Management is Actively being done by the Vinedresser ...
- Technique is being applied ...
“Cleanness” ... “Abiding” ... “Pruning”
- A Goal—and a Reason —“Discipleship’s AIM” ... Jn 15:8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.
 - There's a Clear and Frequently Highlighted GOAL ...FRUIT!
 - There's a REASON why this Fruitfulness Matters—It GLORIFIES GOD!

...It is Easy to Lose "Ultimate Things" amidst the consuming routines of "Everyday Things"

One Ultimate Thing That Defines & Explains Everything

...In all of existence--Something Has to be ULTIMATE! ...There has to be an "Ultimate Cause" (for reality to exist) and there has to be an "Ultimate Reason" (for meaning to exist).

What are you doing LCC? ...What are you doing (apostle Paul)? ...How does one explain being a Disciple or "Discipleship"?

"God created us for his own glory. ...This fact guarantees that our lives are significant. When we first realize that God did not need to create us and does not need us for anything, we could conclude that our lives have no importance at all. But Scripture tells us that we were created to glorify God, indicating that we are important to God himself. This is the final definition of genuine importance or significance to our lives: If we are truly important to God for all eternity, then what greater measure of importance or significance could we want? ...The fact that God created us for his glory determines the correct answer to the question, "What is our purpose in life?" Our purpose must be to fulfill the reason that God created us: to glorify him." **Wayne Grudem**, Systematic Theology, p. 565

Touch Anything or Any Moment in Your Life and Ponder Its Reason ...it is For the Glory of God

Isaiah 43:1, 7 ¹ But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: ...⁷ everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."
 ...Creatures CANNOT have a Meaningful Existence without Consulting THE CREATOR!

Hab 2:14 For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

1 Cor 10:31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Rom 11:36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:11 —in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

The Hour When This Matters the Most

...Life Wanders Into Difficult and Disorienting Places! ...Discipleship will Wander into Difficult and Disorienting Places! ...We will need to know that there's Something Ultimate Going On There!

John 12:27-28 “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.”

- ***Moments of a Troubled Soul NEED a God-Centered Awareness! ...an awareness that a Perfect, Sovereign, Loving, All-Powerful, Intentional God is Fulfilling His Good Purpose in Creation!***
 - Note the temptation of the "Troubled Soul" is to SEEK RELIEF! ... "Save me from this!" ...The Apostle Paul (2Cor 12:8) ...Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane ("if it is possible let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will but your will be done")

When Ultimate Purpose Encounters the Individual

...The Rise of the Individual!

Isaiah 14:12-14 “How you are fallen from heaven,
 O Day Star, son of Dawn!
 How you are cut down to the ground,
 you who laid the nations low!
¹³ You said in your heart,
 ‘I will ascend to heaven;
 above the stars of God
 I will set my throne on high;
 I will sit on the mount of assembly
 in the far reaches of the north;
¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
 I will make myself like the Most High.’

...The is the Manifesto of the Ultimate “Center-Relocator”!! ...Unlike the Christ who said—
 “Not My Will”; “Don’t Save Me from This Hour”—Fulfill Your Purpose! Glorify Your Name!
 ...Satan, the Ultimate Individual, marches to his own tune! ...Sobering what this “Individual Quest” brought on creation!

The Battleground of Centrality! ...What central 'thing' defines all other things? ...the glory of God or the interests of Man (is existence God-Centered or Man-Centered?) ...We are desperately in need of an explanation of life that answers to something! —Whatever that is becomes our "Functional Center"!

...The Lightning Rod of Our Time—Human Sexuality.

The Creator's CENTER for Sexuality — God's Purpose at the Center ...takes its cues from a God with a plan that he has sufficiently revealed

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

... "Imaging God" is a Divine Assignment for Man's Unique Role in Creation! ...Which means Our Life Definitions are NOT Up for GRABS! We're not free to "Self-Define"!

Genesis 2:20-24 The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. ²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²² And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;

she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man."

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father
and his mother and hold fast to his wife,
and they shall become one flesh.

... "Sexual Immorality" could be defined as "Re-Centered Sexuality" ...when God created Human Sexuality he "centered it" on something. His Purpose was brought to bear on the existence of sexuality.

The AIM of Discipleship is The GLORY of GOD! ... “Not my will by Thy Will” ... “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me”

So... LCC, What Are You Doing?

...With all your activities and ambitions and meetings and programs and strategies? What are you doing? ...Ultimately, we are seeking the Glory of God!

...We are “Growing, together, for the Glory of God”