

Imagine Great Relationships...With God
January 14, 2018
Lynn Haven UMC

Introduction

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:28-31 NIV)

Christianity is not a religion, it is a relationship. In fact, life is all about relationships. Good or bad they have a tendency to affect our outlook on things (whether we are aware of it or not). First and foremost, we must examine the condition of the most important connection we should be trying to develop. If you are pursuing intimacy with God, He must be at the heart and center of your life. This closeness will inevitably fill your heart with His unique brand of unwavering, all-consuming love. And a filled cup is better able to pour out its contents on all who are thirsty.

Digging Deeper

We enjoy a great relationship with God when we...

Express our AFFECTION to Him.

- Read Jeremiah 29:13. Does your life reflect your love for God? When people look at you do they see Him? Your whole heart is the single most precious gift you can give to God. As we know from reading the words of the prophet Jeremiah, when we seek Him with our whole hearts, we shall find Him! So if our love for God is true and unbreakable, it should be evident to everyone that you belong to Him. So how do you express your affection to God? How can you convey your devotion to Christ in the way you interact with others?

Focus our ATTENTION on Him.

- We are all so busy. So many things are pulling our attention strings in every direction, every day. How can we possibly develop a meaningful relationship with anyone, let alone God, if we never spend time nurturing one? If a deeper connection is your heart's desire, a good way to start is to begin your day with some kind of prayer or devotional time. This can truly set your mind on the right path so that all parts of your day become infused with thoughts of Him. A wise person once said, "If you are too busy to pray, you are too busy." Have you ever found yourself thinking you were just too busy to read your Bible or pray? If so, it is urgent that you spend time considering how to shift your priorities and what sacrifices might need to be made to re-center yourself. It is of eternal importance to know and love the Lord your God with all your soul, mind and strength. Why not join our church in reading the Psalms for the first 90 days of 2018? The plan can be found on our website at: www.myllumc.net/connect/adult/adult-groups.
- What are some ideas you have tried that have worked to help you make sure your focus is on God throughout your day?

Use our ABILITIES for Him.

- Read Matthew 5:13-16 NLT. Do you ever spend time thinking of how you can honor God in your workplace, at home with your family, at the grocery store, at sporting or social events...basically in your everyday life? We are called to be a light for His pathways. We are not putting baskets on our heads here in Lynn Haven, FL, are we? No, we must stay salty! We understand that by serving our community and world we are showing God that we care about the least of these, the sick and hurting, the lonely and left out...all of His children. So how can you use your talents and abilities to honor the Lord in big or small ways? Consider volunteering to serve in one of the many ministries here at Lynn Haven UMC. You can reach out to Heather Howell at heather@mylhumc.net to find out where your specific gifts might best be utilized in an effort to make disciples. And by doing so, you will be working to bring God glory and further advance His Kingdom!

Conclusion

Relationships with people can be tricky, but with God, the directions are pretty straightforward. We know that we should offer the Lord our affection and undivided attention while using our abilities all for His glory. So what will you do differently to pursue a deeper relationship with God? The ball is always in our court because God is, was and always will be waiting for us to cry out in response to His love.