

### Introduction: Read Luke 22:24-30

“Who will be the greatest?”

**Question:** Greatest in the eyes of one another vs. Great in God's eyes?

**Note:** The final comment by Jesus was a future, a Kingdom, a greatness beyond their wildest dreams, but the focus was different; how to get there is radically different.

### Read Great Books

*Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing, and perfect will.*

Romans 12:2

### Think Great Thoughts

*Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.*

Philippians 4:8

### Pursue Great People

*He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.*

Proverbs 13:20

### Dream Great Dreams

*Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us...*

Ephesians 3:20-21

### **Pray Great Prayers**

*<sup>23</sup>In that day you will no longer ask Me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in My name. <sup>24</sup>Until now you have not asked for anything in My name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.*

John 16:23-24

### **Take Great Risks**

*And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.*

Hebrews 11:6

### **Make Great Sacrifices**

*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.*

John 15:13

### **Enjoy Great Moments**

*<sup>12</sup>I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. <sup>13</sup>That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God.*

Ecclesiastes 3:12-13

### **Empower Great People**

*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.*

2 Timothy 2:2

### **Develop Great Habits**

*...for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.*

1 Timothy 4:8

**Introduction: "We are what we eat..."**

- It's true physically.
- It's true psychologically.
- It's true spiritually.

**Wrong Thinking** ⇒ **Negative Emotions** ⇒ **Unwise Behavior** ⇒ **Devastating Consequences**

(or)

**Right Thinking** ⇒ **Positive Emotions** ⇒ **Wise Behavior** ⇒ **Fruitful Consequences**

**Practice: Think GREAT Thoughts!**

### I. Since we are a product of our thought life, God commands us to “Think **GREAT** thoughts.”

*<sup>8</sup>Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. <sup>9</sup>The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.*

Philippians 4:8-9

- The Command is to **THINK / DWELL** on these things.
- **Logizomai** – to consider, think on, reckon, to deduce, to reason, calculate, and ponder; to deliberate upon through protracted analysis and thought.

“It is not an unemotional or philosophical thought, but the very process of reasoning and deduction that separates good from evil.”

Colin Brown, Dictionary of New Testament

- The amazing story of George Dzundra –

**II. Seven great thoughts to think about...write each on a 3x5 card.**

**1. God**

*Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments, and His paths beyond tracing out!*

Romans 11:33

**2. Yourself**

*The LORD your God is with you, [He is mighty to save]. He will take great delight in you, [He will quiet you with His love], He will rejoice over you with singing.*

Zephaniah 3:17

**3. Others**

*But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

1 Samuel 16:7

**4. Life**

*<sup>23</sup>Then He said to them all: "[If anyone would come after Me], he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me. <sup>24</sup>For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me will save it. <sup>25</sup>What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?"*

Luke 9:23-25

### 5. The Future

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*

Jeremiah 29:11

### 6. The Past

*<sup>13</sup>Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 3:13-14

### 7. Challenges

*<sup>2</sup>Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, <sup>3</sup>knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. <sup>4</sup>And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

James 1:2-4

## Ways to think great thoughts:

1. Memorize and meditate on the 3x5 cards you make from the above scriptures.
2. Use drive time.
3. Listen to great music.
4. Take walks in nature.
5. Personalize truth of promises and Scripture to address your own personal areas of growth (3x5 cards).



**Introduction:** It all began in Hong Kong, the winter of 1978.

- He put it in my hand.
- God put it in my heart.
- I put it in my briefcase for over 25 years.

**The Book:** The Knowledge of the HOLY.

A.W. Tozer

**Practice: Read GREAT Books!**

*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Romans 12:2

### Read Great Books that...

#### 1. **BROADEN** your world.

- Biographies
  - *Daws* – The story of Dawson Trotman
  - *Uncle Cam* – The story of Wycliffe Bible translators
  - *Spiritual Secrets* – Hudson Taylor

\*God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things.
- History
- Philosophy
- Geography
- World religions

#### 2. **SHARPEN** your mind.

- *Knowing God* – J. I. Packer
- *He is There and He is Not Silent*– Francis Schaffer
- *Escape from Reason* – Francis Schaeffer
- *The God Who is There*– Francis Schaeffer and James W. Sire
- *Evidence That Demands a Verdict* – Josh McDowell
- *Mere Christianity* – C. S. Lewis
- *Reasons for Belief* – Norman Geisler

#### 3. **INFLAME** your heart.

- *Power Through Prayer* – E. M. Bounds
- *Humility: The Beauty of Holiness* – Andrew Murray
- *Calvary Road* – Roy Hession
- *The Pursuit of God* – A. W. Tozer
- *True Spirituality* – Francis Schaeffer

### 4. **DEVELOP** your skills.

- *The Christian Family* – Larry Christiansen
- *Communication: Key to Your Marriage* – H. Norman Wright
- *Learning to Lead* – Fred Smith
- *The Effective Executive* – Peter Drucker
- *Basic Theology* – Charles Ryrie

### 5. **HEAL** your soul.

- *Ins and Outs of Rejection* – Charles R. Solomon
- *The Strong and The Weak* – Paul Tournier
- *The Return of the Prodigal Son* – Henri J.M. Nouwen
- *Abba's Child* – Brennan Manning

### 6. First and foremost, read the **BIBLE**.

- Passion – New Testament
- Leadership – Nehemiah
- Heart – Psalms
- Falling in love with Jesus – John (the Gospels)
- Discipleship – Mark
- Wisdom and how to live – Proverbs & Epistles

### Summary:

1. Great Christians are people of “the **WORD**.”
2. Great Christians read **GREAT BOOKS**.”

### Some practical next steps:

1. Begin with regular time in the Bible in a version you can understand.
2. Use a resource that will provide some structure, understanding, and additional insight. (*Daily Walk Devotion*, *YouthWalk*, *One Year Devotional with God*, etc.)
3. Don't be overwhelmed, but develop a plan to read one book every month or two.
4. Enjoy the journey. It is not how many books you read, It's how deeply the ones you read sink into your life.

### **Introduction: More is really “caught than taught.”**

- It's true when we are young.
  
- It's true when we grow up.
  
- Timeless Axiom: We become most like those we admire and those with whom we interact most frequently.

### **Practice: Pursue GREAT People!**

*[He who walks with the wise grows wise], but a companion of fools suffers harm.*

Proverbs 13:20

### I. Why pursue great people?

#### A. God's Word is **EMPHATIC** about the company we keep.

*Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."*

1 Corinthians 15:33

*Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.*

Hebrews 13:7

*<sup>15</sup>Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. <sup>16</sup>Therefore, I urge you to imitate me.*

1 Corinthians 4:15-16

*As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.*

Proverbs 27:17

#### B. Our baggage and backgrounds **DEMAND** it!

- No one had a perfect parent.
- Wounds and deficits are normal.
- We must choose to deal with the damage constructively.
- God uses people to heal and restore our lives.

Reference: *The Wounded Healer* by Henry Nouwen

## II. How do you pursue great people?

A. Start by looking in the rear view mirror. What four or five people have most positively impacted your life?

1.

2.

3.

4.

B. Now, look out the windshield. We all need three kinds of people in our lives.

1. A **PAUL** to “learn from.”

2. A **BARNABAS** to “share with.”

3. A **TIMOTHY** to “help grow.”

### III. Get started without getting discouraged.

#### A **WARNING** to heed.

- For Timothy looking for Paul.
- For Paul looking for Timothy.

#### A **PERSPECTIVE** to consider.

##### “Role Players”

- Father figure
- Sponsor
- Cheerleader
- Seer
- Hero
- Expert
- Counselor
- Confidant

#### An **ACTION** plan to follow.

- Pray earnestly
- Take initiative
- Start in your relational network
- Ask for help
- Persevere
- Do it by proxy (tapes, books, phone, etc.)
- Make time in your schedule; you'll never have enough time



**Thesis:**

God delights...

to do IMPOSSIBLE things...

through IMPROBABLE people...

to IMPART exceeding grace...

to UNDESERVING recipients.

**Practice: Dream GREAT Dreams!**

*<sup>20</sup>Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, <sup>21</sup>to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.*

Ephesians 3:20-21

### I. How does God do it?

He invites ordinary people to dream something so great that it would be impossible if God did not do it.

#### The basis of sanctified dreaming:

#### 1. God is **ABLE**.

*Ah Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You.*

Jeremiah 32:17

*"For nothing will be impossible with God."*

Luke 1:37

#### 2. God is **DESIROUS**.

*...but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him."*

1 Corinthians 2:9

#### 3. God has **PROMISED**.

*Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart.*

Psalms 37:4

#### 4. God **INVITES** us.

*Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession.*

Psalms 2:8

*<sup>12</sup>Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father.*

*<sup>13</sup>Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup>If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it."*

John 14:12-14

### II. How God births dreams in His people?

- **Abram** – He commands us to step out of our “comfort zone.”
  
- **Joseph** – He puts a dream within our heart.
  
- **Moses** – He allows us to fail in our attempt to accomplish His dreams in our own power.
  
- **David** – He teaches us through adversity to love the “Dream-giver” more than “the dreams.”
  
- **Paul** – He clarifies our calling in times of crisis and often uses our worst failures as the platform of His future fulfillment.
  
- **Jesus** – The dream will cost us our life and appear to others as the height of folly just before God accomplishes the impossible through us.

### III. How to develop bite-sized dreams for...

- Your **life**
- Your **marriage**
- Your **children**
- Your **career**
- Your **ministry**

### IV. The process:

- **Write** it down
- **Read** it over regularly
- **Pray** over your dreams
- **Look** for God's intervention and direction

### Conclusion:

God has a **DREAM** for you!

### Introduction: A prayer I will never forget.

- Haiti – 1982
- A jungle compound – “hospital of pain.”
- The professor had a “secret weapon of power.”

### Practice: Pray GREAT Prayers!

*<sup>23</sup>In that day you will no longer ask Me anything. I tell you the truth, My Father will give you whatever you ask in My name. <sup>24</sup>Until now you have not asked for anything in My name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.*

John 16:23-24

### Five characteristics of great prayers:

#### 1. Great prayers are deeply **PERSONAL**.

- Great prayers begin and end with God, Himself.

##### Examples:

- Moses Exodus 33:17-19
- David Psalm 27:4
- Paul Philippians 3:8-10
- Jesus John 17:3

##### Jesus' teaching:

*"Our Father" – Abba Father* Matthew 6:9

#### 2. Great prayers are birthed in **BROKENNESS**.

- Great prayers reflect our desperate dependency on Him.

##### Examples:

- Moses Exodus 4:11-12
- David Psalm 51:16-17
- Nehemiah Nehemiah 1:3-4
- Isaiah Isaiah 6

##### Jesus' teaching:

*"Who is in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name."* Matthew 6:9

### 3. Great prayers **CHAMPION** God's agenda.

- Great prayers are prayed by people who understand God's agenda for His world.

#### Examples:

- Moses Exodus 32:9-14
- Nehemiah Nehemiah 1:10-11
- Solomon 1 Kings 3:7-14

#### Jesus' teaching:

*"Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*

Matthew 6:10

### 4. Great prayers take God **SERIOUSLY**.

- Great prayers are promise centered, not problem centered.

#### Examples:

- Moses Nehemiah 1:6-9
- Nehemiah Psalm 103:6-10
- David Philippians 1, Ephesians 1, Colossians 1
- Paul

#### Jesus' teaching:

*"Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."*

Matthew 6:11-12

### 5. Great prayers demand great **COURAGE!** Why?

- They are **DANGEROUS!**
- They boldly demand of God that He live up to His character.

#### **Examples:**

- Abraham Genesis 18
- Moses Exodus 32

- They dare to stand in the gap becoming the answer to the prayer if God wills it.

#### **Examples:**

Ezekiel 22:30-31

- Esther
- Nehemiah
- Jesus

#### **Jesus' teaching:**

*"For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever!" Amen.*

Matthew 6:13b

**Summary:** Great prayers ask the **improbable**, expect the **impossible**, and receive the **unthinkable** because of Jesus.

- Because of Jesus' **command**, we boldly ask the **improbable**. Matthew 7:7-8
- Because of Jesus' **promise**, we expect the **impossible**. John 16:24
- Because of Jesus' **power**, we receive the **unthinkable**. Ephesians 3:20



**Introduction: Did you ever wonder why God uses some people more than others?**

**Timeless Axiom**

“Every Christian’s life is marked by ‘windows of opportunity’ that demand that they take a **radical step of faith** in order to follow Christ and fulfill His agenda for their life.”

- What makes these steps of faith “**radical**” is that they always involve **significant personal risk!**
- Where there is **no risk** there is **no faith!**

- |                                |   |  |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Where there is <u>no</u> Faith | – | there is no power  |
| Where there is <u>no</u> Faith | – | there is no joy  |
| Where there is <u>no</u> Faith | – | there is no intimacy with God  |
| Where there is <u>no</u> Faith | – | there is no supernatural miracles  |
| Where there is <u>no</u> Faith | – | there is no reward   |
| Where there is <u>no</u> Faith | – | it is impossible to please God   |
| Where there is <u>no</u> Faith | – | there is hollow religious activity, moralistic rules, and dead orthodoxy |

**Practice: Take GREAT Risks!**

*“and without faith it is impossible to please God...”*

Hebrews 11:6

### I. God's calling on our lives always demands we take great **RISKS!**

#### A. Old Testament examples of great risk takers:

- Abram - **LEAVES** his home, his land and his family.
- Moses - **RETURNS** to his home to deliver God's people.
- David - **FIGHTS** a giant that others refuse to face.
- Esther - **CONFRONTS** evil in the highest position of authority.

#### B. New Testament examples of great risk takers:

- Peter - **LEAVES** home, business, and future to follow Christ.
- Paul - **RETURNS** to those who he sought to kill to obey God's call for his life.
- Jairus - **FIGHTS** the religious status quo and lays his reputation and career on the line to seek help for his daughter.
- The woman with the issue of blood - **CONFRONTS** her fears and her culture to touch Jesus and be healed.

### II. What do all great risk takers have in common?

- **Fear** – of what might happen.
- **Faith** – to “step out” in spite of their fear.
- **Favor** – God's reward and blessing on their life.

### III. How to become a great risk taker (GRT) for the glory of God:

#### A. Refocus your **FEAR**.

Hebrews 10:38-11:3

*<sup>38</sup>But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him. <sup>39</sup>But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.*

*<sup>1</sup>Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.*

*<sup>2</sup>This is what the ancients were commended for. <sup>3</sup>By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*

**Summary:** GRT's fear the loss of God's favor more than the loss of people or things.

#### B. Rejuvenate your **FAITH**.

Hebrews 11:4-6

- By starting with "little things." – Abel

*<sup>4</sup>By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.*

- By pondering "big things." – Enoch

*<sup>5</sup>By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.*

- By remembering the “main thing.” – pleasing God

*<sup>6</sup>And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

**Summary: GRT's see faith as a verb and not a noun.**

### C. Recall God's **FAITHFULNESS**.

Hebrews 11:7-40

- Noah – saves the human race
- Abraham – becomes a great nation
- Sarah – gets a child
- Moses – delivers God's people
- Daniel – is delivered from the lion's den
- Jericho's wall falls down
- Rahab – becomes a hero
- David – becomes a king

**Summary: GRT's believe God's “invisible promises” for tomorrow are more reliable than the “visible pleasures” of today.**

### **Personal application – your next step:**

By faith, what risk does God want you to take in order to please Him?

- Is there something or someone to leave?
- Is there something or someone to return to?
- Is there something or someone to confront?
- Is there something or someone to fight for?

### **What specific step(s) will you take this week?**

I will: \_\_\_\_\_.

## Introduction: Pondering the Power of "Sacrifice"

"Sacrifice" – The act of giving up, destroying, or permitting injury to, or foregoing something valued for the sake of something having a more pressing claim.

Webster's Dictionary

**Great sacrifices**, even in movies, art, music, or athletics produce a profound and almost inexplicable emotional and spiritual response.

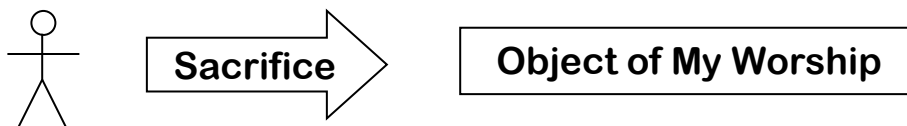
- We admire those who make **great sacrifices**.
- We enshrine those who make **great sacrifices**.
- We honor those who make **great sacrifices**.
- We reward those who make **great sacrifices**.
- We seek to emulate those who make **great sacrifices**.

**Why?** – What is this mystical union and soul connection we subconsciously make when we witness a **great sacrifice** for a noble cause, or a personal relationship?

**Answer** – Sacrifice is the clearest and greatest evidence of the extent of one's love and devotion toward a person, a cause, or a thing. (John 15:13)

❖ In short, sacrifice is "the arrow" that points toward who or what we worship.

(Ascribe worth, importance, value to)



**I. Understanding Biblical sacrifice and worship:**

**A. Lessons from Leviticus:**

Chapters 1-10

- 5 Offerings prescribed for worship in the Old Testament.
  - 2 Compulsory Offerings = sin, guilt
  - 3 Voluntary Offerings = burnt, grain, peace

Summary: Access to God demands a sacrifice; fellowship with God grows through sacrifice.

**B. Lessons from the life of Abraham:**

Genesis 22

- The Requirement
- The Response
- The Result

Summary: God periodically tests the singularity of our devotion through sacrifices.

**C. Lessons from the teachings of Jesus:**

Luke 14:25-35

- The Call
- The Cost
- The Cause

Summary: Jesus demands absolute supremacy in our hearts as a condition for being His follower.

**D. Lessons from the Apostle Paul:**

Romans 12:1

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.*

Summary: The sacrifice God requires is “my life” 24/7 surrendered to Him to do His will.

## II. What motivates great Christians to make great sacrifices?

### A. They grasp God's unconditional **LOVE**.

A deep sense of brokenness...

Psalm 51:16-17

over their own sin, indebtedness to God's grace...

1 Timothy 1:15-16

and gratitude for God's mercy and forgiveness.

Luke 7:47

*"I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little."*

Jesus ~ Luke 7:47

### B. They embrace God's relational **ECONOMY**.

God measures our love/devotion not by the size of our gifts, but by the size of our sacrifice. (Luke 21:2)

*"...This poor widow has put in more than all the others."*

Jesus ~ Luke 21:3

### C. They trust God's eternal **GOODNESS**.

An absolute conviction that the rewards for their sacrifice far out-weigh the cost. (Mark 10:28-31)

*"...no one who has left home, or brothers, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age...and in the age to come eternal life."*

Jesus ~ Mark 10:29-30

### D. They recognize God's sovereign **OWNERSHIP**.

An acute awareness that **great sacrifice** is not praiseworthy, but a privilege, since all we have belongs to Him. (1 Chronicles 29:14-18)

*But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from You, and we have given You only what comes from Your hand.*

David ~ 1 Chronicles 29:14

### III. **Next steps to becoming great in God's eyes:**

- Have you surrendered your whole life to Christ as a living and holy sacrifice?
- Are you growing in loving God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength?
  - Evidences might include the following:
    - Your heart – revealed by your financial sacrifice.
    - Your mind – renewing your mind with God's Word.
    - Your soul – deep talks with God and personal worship.
    - Your strength – serving in ministry to others.

### **Conclusion – Sacrifice is merely “love with clothes on.”**

Where there is great love there will always be **great sacrifices**.



**Introduction:**

“Joy is the serious business of Heaven.”

C.S. Lewis

*<sup>1</sup>There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven:*

*<sup>4a</sup>time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance.*

Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4

*<sup>11</sup>He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. <sup>12</sup>I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. <sup>13</sup>That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God.*

Ecclesiastes 3:11-13

*<sup>19</sup>Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work—this is a gift of God. <sup>20</sup>He seldom reflects on the days of his life, because God keeps him occupied with gladness of heart.*

Ecclesiastes 5:19-20

**Are you deeply enjoying your life?**

### I. Why is it so important to enjoy great moments?

- It reminds us of God's **GOODNESS**. Psalm 84:11
  
- It sustains us in **ADVERSITY**. Nehemiah 8:10
  
- It honors God as the **SOURCE** of all our joy. James 1:17
  
- It connects our **HEARTS** to those we love.
  - Mary “treasured these things in her heart.” Luke 2:19
  
  - Jesus “eagerly awaited to share the feast with His disciples.” Luke 22:15
  
- It's how God renews our...
  - bodies with rest ~ Sabbath
  
  - hearts with laughter ~ Proverbs
  
  - souls with life ~ Psalms

## II. What keeps us from enjoying great moments?

### A. A distorted view of God.

Luke 15

### B. A warped theology of "pleasure."

- Old Testament Feasts
  - Private Feasts
  - Communal Feasts – Commanded by God
    - Weekly festival = The Sabbath
    - Monthly festival = The New Moon
    - Annual festivals = Passover, Pentecost, Booths, Day of Atonement
- New Testament Life and Teaching
  - Jesus' Words and Works
  - The Command

1 Timothy 6:17

### C. Unwillingness to face our mis-beliefs and/or unhealthy behavior patterns.

- The Workaholic: Work defines your life, so your best energy is spent there.
- The Perfectionist: Long hours are required to make every task flawless.
- The Approval Seeker: Work piles up because your fear of "saying no" to others.
- The Escapist: Work provides an escape from painful relationships or other problems.
- The Materialist: An insatiable desire for possessions drives you to increase your work load.

### III. How can you learn to enjoy great moments?

➤ **SLOW DOWN** - Ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life. Psalm 46:10

➤ **SLIM DOWN** - Do less, so you can enjoy it more. Luke 10:41-42

➤ **SIT DOWN** - Stop living “for” tomorrow, or “because of” yesterday;  
enjoy this very moment. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

➤ **SEE AROUND** - What blessing from God could you celebrate today?  
Psalm 34:1-2

### Conclusion:

Great Christians **SCHEDULE / PLAN** great moments!

### Introduction: Who's the greatest in God's eyes?

- A **BOLD** request

*<sup>35</sup>Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him. "Teacher," they said, "we want You to do for us whatever we ask." <sup>36</sup>"What do you want Me to do for you?" He asked. <sup>37</sup>They replied, "Let one of us sit at Your right and the other at Your left in Your glory."*

Mark 10:35-37

- An **INDIGNANT** response

*<sup>41</sup>When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John.*

Mark 10:41

- A **RADICAL** redefinition

*<sup>42</sup>Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup>Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant <sup>44</sup>and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup>For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."*

Mark 10:42-45

True greatness is **SERVING** others for the glory of God!

**Conclusion**: We become "great" in God's eyes by helping others become greater than ourselves. In other words...

**Great Christians EMPOWER great people.**

*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.*

2 Timothy 2:2

• **Old Testament Examples of Empowering Others:**

- Moses – Joshua
- Elijah – Elisha
- Eli – Samuel

• **New Testament Examples of Empowering Others:**

- Jesus – The 12 Disciples
- Paul – Timothy
- Barnabas – Mark

• **Summary: Good Christians “live the life,” Great Christians “leave a legacy.”**

**II. How can you leave a legacy for God's glory?**

• **INVEST WISELY - help many, train a few.**

2 Timothy 2:2

- Pray for God's direction

James 1:5

- Look under your roof first

1 Timothy 3:4

- Look for F.A.T. people

2 Timothy 2:2

F **AITHFUL**

A **AVAILABLE**

T **EACHABLE**

- **Follow Jesus' 4-fold process of empowering great people:**

1. **BRING** them in.

- Model the message
- Invite them into the action
- Engage them in authentic relationships

*He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach...*

Mark 3:14

2. **BUILD** them up.

- Affirm their strengths
- Inspire their dreams
- Confront their flaws

*"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."*

Matthew 4:19

3. **TRAIN** them for.

- Instruct their mind
- Develop their heart
- Equip their hands

*A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.*

Luke 6:40

4. **SEND** them out.

- Clarify their mission.
- Confirm their calling.
- Continue to mentor.

*<sup>19</sup>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, <sup>20</sup>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 28:19-20

### III. Why do so few Christians “Leave a Legacy” for God’s glory?

- Lack of **DISCIPLINE** - “We cannot impart what we do not possess.”

Dr. Howard Hendricks

*<sup>16</sup>Therefore I urge you to imitate me. <sup>17</sup>For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.*

I Corinthians 4:16-17

- Lack of **VISION** - “Our failure to see beyond our own life span is a real hindrance.”

Dr. Howard Hendricks

*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.*

2 Timothy 2:2

- Lack of **FOCUS** - “A life of impact is about this one thing I do, not these 20 things I dabble at.”

Dr. Howard Hendricks

*<sup>13</sup>Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup>All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.*

Philippians 3:13-15



**Introduction: The Power of Habits**

Great Christians **DEVELOP** great habits!

**The grace of God is both the desire and the ability to be righteous; to follow Him and do what is right.**

## Six great habits that cultivate grace:

### 1. The principle of priority:

- Put **GOD FIRST!**

*“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.”*

Matthew 6:33

### 2. The principle of transformation:

- Take out **THE TRASH!**

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Romans 12:2

### 3. The principle of responsibility:

- Do your own **DISHES!**

*“He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.”*

Luke 16:10

### 4. The principle of clarity:

- **WRITE** it down!

*A plan in the heart of a man is [like] deep water, but a man of understanding draws it out.*

Proverbs 20:5

3 x 5 Cards - The Power of **CLEAR CUT OBJECTIVES.**

Calendars - The Freedom of **STRUCTURE.**

“To Do” Lists - The Necessity of **FOCUS.**

Journaling - The Importance of **REFLECTION.**

### 5. The principle of inertia:

➤ Do it **NOW!**

*<sup>30</sup>I passed by the field of the sluggard, and by the vineyard of the man lacking sense; <sup>31</sup>And behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles, its surface was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. <sup>32</sup>When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, [and] received instruction. <sup>33</sup>"A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, <sup>34</sup>then your poverty will come [as] a robber, and your want like an armed man."*

Proverbs 24:30-34

### 6. The principle of restoration:

➤ Turn it **OFF!**

*<sup>9</sup>So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. <sup>10</sup>For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. <sup>11</sup>Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.*

Hebrews 4:9-11



## Good to Great in God's Eyes Reading List

If you've been listening to *Good to Great*, you may have noticed that I've referred to multiple books and resources that have made a personal impact on my life. We've had lots of people ask what those resources are, so I thought I'd just post them here for you. My sincere hope is that you continue to add to this list, books that help you grow and mature in your personal faith journey with Christ.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Chris", written in a cursive style.

- *The Knowledge of the Holy* A.W. Tozer
- *Daws: The Story of Dawson Trotman, Founder of the Navigators* Betty Lee Skinner
- *Uncle Cam* James & Marti Hefley  
The life story of Cameron Townsend, who founded Wycliffe Bible Translators
- *Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret* Howard Taylor, Gregg Lewis and Raymond Todd
- *Power Through Prayer* E.M. Bounds
- *Humility: The Beauty of Holiness* Andrew Murray
- *The Calvary Road* Roy Hession
- *What Happens When Women Pray* Evelyn Carol Christenson
- *The Christian Family* Larry Christenson
- *Communication: Key to Your Marriage* H. Norman Wright
- *The Intimacy Factor* David and Jan Stoop
- *The Effective Executive* Peter Drucker
- *Basic Theology* Charles Ryrie
- *Explore the Book* J. Sidlow Baxter
- *Methodical Bible Study* Robert A. Traina
- *The Strong and the Weak* Paul Tournier
- *The Return of the Prodigal Son* Henri J. M. Nouwen
- *Abba's Child* Brennan Manning
- *Romans* Jay Edward Adams
- *Escape from Reason* Francis Schaeffer
- *The God Who is There* Francis Schaeffer
- *He is There and He is Not Silent* Francis Schaeffer
- *True Spirituality* Francis Schaeffer