

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

June 18, 2023 "Undistracted" by Bob Goff. Recapturing your purpose and rediscovering your joy. What if I have questions, or doubts, or fail?

I Intro.

It's June and it feels like summer. Even though some of our regular activities are slowing down we still have things you're going to want to participate in. By now you've seen the appeal to address some building and financial needs we're having to fix. We hope you are fed and ministered to by NCC, and that you can be an essential part of us moving forward. We have many ways you can plug into life at NCC. You can find all those through our website, app, and social media sites. Our app is the best way to livestream our services, but you can also livestream on FaceBook and YouTube. You can revisit past services, sign up for events and even give. We're encouraged by your presence when you gather with us. New and familiar faces join us every Sunday. If you join us online, we appreciate your presence. We are 100% committed to our virtual attenders. We are your church family, and if there is anything you need, prayer, or anything else, please let us know. This is our weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through from Sunday's message. Whether you were able to participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing. You can use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. We hope you find this tool helpful on your spiritual journey.

II Recap.

We started our annual summer tradition of a book-book in June. The book we're using is "**Undistracted**" by Bob Goff. Bob is such a fascinating and inspiring person. I would love to go into detail here, but just Google his name and do a little dive into who he is. You'll be as impressed and inspired by Bob as I have been over the years.

The basic premise of "**Undistracted**" is that within our skills, passions, talents is a God-given purpose for us that can give our lives meaning and fulfillment. The primary problem in finding this purpose is that we become so...you guessed it. Distracted. Bob, in his own way, walks us through some truths, wisdom, and practices that can help us become aware of our own personal distractions, do the work of managing or overcoming them, so we can find our purpose.

This message is for all of us ... at any age. This is NOT a series on; how to pick your career or life path. This series will help us live a more focused and intentionally purposeful life, so we can experience the joy God wants for us. Last week we talked about how distractions can...well distract us from our purpose. Today we talk about what it looks like to deal with questions, doubt and failure..

III Sunday.

This Sunday is a topic we weave into a lot of our messages. We want to give space to openly and honestly talk about the "questions, doubts, and failures" we all experience. We live in the real world. And we face real world issues that sometimes overwhelm and overpower the nice little structure of beliefs and truths we've built to explain things. And life can just wash all those self-constructed beliefs away. So, we're going to talk about that, but we want to connect it with living into our purpose. So, the starting questions will be a little different.

What is something you once believed but don't anymore?

It can be anything. Either something you were told as a kid, or something you just assumed. We'll switch from general beliefs to personal practices.

When was the last time you tried to do something you've never done before? What was it?

What is something you've always wanted to do but haven't been able to yet?

What's holding you back?

My guess is what's holding you back are questions, doubts and failures.

The scripture Sunday was a story of a man who wanted to believe, really wanted for things to turn out a different way. But life had not gone the way he wanted to. And his questions, doubts, and failures had gotten in the way of moving forward. So, read **Mark 9:17-27** and we'll unpack it.

What jumped out to you about this passage?

What did it say to you about dealing with questions and doubts?

What did it mean to you that the man recognized his inability to believe, and his desire to?

Here are some thoughts from Bob's Book "**Undistracted**" that can also be seen in the passage.

1. Accept faith is not easy...EVER. Faith often goes against everything the natural world believes. You will never satisfy all your doubts, you will never answer all your questions, and you will never...stop failing. But that shouldn't hold you back. Recognize that faith will be a constant struggle.

2. Be ridiculously available. Knowing God can show up in any way he chooses, we experiment towards purpose. We often can be trapped in the religion of our upbringing which may have worked in the past, but keeps us from allowing ourselves to experience God in new and fresh ways. Be open in every way for God to speak and move you. And step into those opportunities.

3. Sample everything. Childhood faith keeps us confined and bound up. Finding your purpose and dealing with questions, doubts, and failure should move us towards trying and sampling new things. It's like an ice cream shop. You can ask for samples before you make your choice. Sometimes finding our purpose requires trial and error. Try a new thing, if it doesn't pan out, then try something else.

4. Embrace every failure. Disappointments, rejections, being abandoned, messing up big time is just a part of life. Failing doesn't make you a failure. Failing allows you to cross things off the list of possibilities. "*Welp...we know not to try that again!*" Don't be afraid to fail. All the great people have.

5. Be terrifyingly authentic. People I admire the most are the ones who share their real selves. Now don't overshare. We don't want to know EVERYTHING about you. But the more we know the real you, the more we trust you and your journey. And it's in being authentic that you can find your purpose. It's the bravery to be real.

The father in the story practiced all these things, and we can also.

IV Challenge.

The final thing we can do.

6. 20 seconds of insane courage. What would it look like to step into some new and never explored place in your world? Don't overthink it. Don't make a lengthy list of pro's and con's. Just feel the calling and go. This is the history of NCC. This church was started by people who actually believed that worship could look different, people could come as they are, and that blacks and whites could worship, serve, and work side by side. Doesn't sound crazy now...but it did back then.

Finding your purpose requires being vulnerable, taking some risks, and venturing into areas you may have never ventured into before. All the stories of people in the bible who seemed to find what God had created them to do started with that first step of trusting God. Not trusting in knowing the details, but trusting in a God who created you for great things.

What would it look like for you to step into that trust?