

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

October 23, 2022 "The great search. How can I find out what I really want?"

I Intro.

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work through from the message Sunday. Whether you were able to participate in this service or not, this devotion is free-standing, and you can use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. Fall is here and we have several things planned to the end of the year. Our children's program is growing and we're still tweaking ways to love on them well. We also have many ways you can plug into life at NCC. You can find all that through our brand new website, upgraded app, and social media sites. We're so encouraged by your love and presence when you gather with us. A great group of familiar and new faces join us each Sunday. If you're joining us online, we appreciate your presence also. We are 100% committed to our virtual attenders. We are your church family, and if there is anything you need, prayer, ideas or suggestions, please pass them our way. We know the future is still uncertain, but we are committed to making our virtual congregation as central to NCC as our in person group.

II Recap.

We'll keep this brief. We started out this series with a conversation about how to search for peace. There were some real down to earth practical applications you could use to grow the ability to experience real peace. Then last week we kind of backtracked and talked about what a great search looks like. It answered the questions of what mindset and lifestyle we adopt so that we can always be aware, awake, and in a position to trade up for better in our lives. Both of these are available online. Today, how to find out what we should search for.

III Sunday.

Most of us have had the experience of standing in front of the fridge or pantry...full of food, and have no idea what we want to eat. Or even stand in front of our closet...full of clothes, and have no idea what we want to wear. Sometimes we're just overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of all of the choices available to us we're frozen in indecision. And sometimes we really aren't in touch with ourselves enough to know what we really want. So, let's start with being frozen in choice, and then we'll talk about what we can do to find out what we should be looking for.

Describe a time when you felt frozen in indecision. What was happening?

Can you name, put words, to what you really value and want out of life?

Our scripture today is found in Proverbs. We're going to read our passages in the reverse order, so we can wrestle a bit with what might a baked in theology. First read **Proverbs 16:9**.

What jumps out to you?

How do you understand this passage as it relates to living for God?

Now read **Proverbs 16:1-3**, (same chapter just earlier).

What jumps out to you?

Does it reveal anything different about living for God?

I just want us to continually ask probing and honest questions about our understanding of the nature of God, how God works, and our role in doing all we can to live for God. So, there were several truths pointed out Sunday that can help us on the journey of discovering what we should be searching for.

B. Actions to find out what you really want. (Not steps). Don't see these as doing one right after another. These are continual conversations, and how you can incorporate them as regular practices into your life. How you can practice these habits, with a healthy pursuit and commitment towards God, to help you choose wisely your path towards God to discover what you want.

1. Stop living on autopilot. Most of us just move mindlessly, habitually, through the world. We don't mean to. We've just packed our lives, and our brains with too much. **Have you ever driven to some place, and when you got there you don't remember the along the way? Do any of you leave things in places you don't remember?**

Because we fill our lives with so much busyness and noise, we drown out the ability to live a focused life. This is "*commit your actions*". **Grow a continual awareness of God's presence, movement around you, and ask him to reveal his truths to you as you move through your world.**

2. Discover where you may be discontent. You should have these constant little vibrations of discontent within you. Like an important relationship in your life, you should be able to feel when a little off. This is not material discontent. Not the consumeristic obsession with more. But the belief there is always a 'better' out there. Since none of us have perfectly aligned our lives 100% directly pointed at God, there should be these continual little inner reminders that our life could always use movement towards peace, wholeness, salvation. Grow the sensitivity to ID them when they arise. There will always be different areas we can feel our life is not quite in place like it could be.

3. Determine what your values are. These are our "*motives*". Our values are what drive our decisions, thoughts, reactions, and more. This is not your specific position on issues, but what drives those positions. Most of us have a vague sense of what we value. **Big ideas**; family, love, freedom, purpose, serving, etc. Most of us when asked to specifically define or describe what these actually mean and how we're allowing them to speak into our everyday life, we would be hard pressed to be able to explain them. Be able to define them in a way others can see you practice them.

Could others know what your values are by just watching you?

What are some foundational values you hold that guide who you are?

4. Discovering what you need to help strengthen your values. If you have real values, want your life to go in a particular direction, there are specific things you need to help you move in that direction. Things you need, only God can provide, to guide you on your search to discover what you really want. Such as input from others, wisdom and experience, devoted learning time, etc.

What do you need, what would help you, give you resources, info, support, to help you along in that direction?

IV Challenge.

This is hard, intentional, real work. We have to continually be practicing these action steps to help guide us discover what we should be searching for. But we have a very generous God who is willing to give us what we need to do this search. All we have to do is ask. It's not about getting it right. Our God is also full of kindness and grace to help us on our journey. We just have to be willing to move.

What is the one next step you could take to grow your ability to discover what you should be searching for?