

Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.

June 11, 2023 "Undistracted" by Bob Goff. Recapturing your purpose and rediscovering your joy. How do I find my purpose?

I Intro.

We're into 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 are 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 own purpose.

A quick word. 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, in order to 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 search for our purpose.

III Sunday.

Since we're diving into the meat of this book by talking about purpose, we'll start with a few questions.

? What is something you can or tend to lose yourself in?

? Is it growth producing, life giving?

? Is it something you love to do, or is it rooted in a job or position?

In the western world we tend to identify our purpose as our job or career. We may use the concept of 'calling', which has some unnecessary baggage with it also, but we'll save that for another conversation. Bob has framed purpose as something greater than just what we do for a living. We may feel a sense of purpose or meaning in what we do, but we have to be careful in limiting what our purpose may be to just a job. Bob defines purpose as something bigger and more spiritual.

Purpose is what brings our life meaning and joy. Bob also says that the journey in discovering our purpose will most likely be time consuming (we'll have to put some effort and energy into it). And will be a continual work of revelation and discovery. But again, our purpose is what will bring joy to our lives. And also the lives of those around us. This kind of joy of being fulfilled is contagious.

Our scripture is a short passage that talks about a few barriers to discovering our purpose, and then what seems like almost a formula for discovering our purpose. Now there's practically nothing in scripture that's a formula to success. However...this passage gives us some great steps in how to live towards our purpose. Read **Matthew 6:31-34** and we'll unpack it.

What jumped out to you from this passage?

What barriers could you see towards discovering our purpose?

What elements, practices, did you see that if implemented in our lives could lead us to discovering our purpose?

1. Emotions and barriers to purpose.

We'll hit verses 31-32 first. To do the work of finding your purpose, you have to begin the process, the work, of dealing with one of the largest distractions EVER!! WORRY. This also includes fear, anxiety, stress, uncertainty, ruminating, being troubled, (*"let not your hearts be troubled"*). This work is a simple understanding ...and a lifetime of practice.

Before you can do the work of finding your purpose, you have to grow a relationship with God where he can begin to deal with these barrier emotions that block your ability to find your purpose. Bad things will happen. You can't avoid that. But to find your purpose, we have to accept "life is hard" as a natural part of life, not something that consumes you trying to avoid. This is easier said than done of course. But it's a life truth people who are spiritually mature know and practice. And how do you do this? Build your house on rock knowing storms will come, waves and wind will crash all around you, but your life won't fall apart because your understanding of God and the world is not built on sand. That means to find your purpose, trust God, you have to look and lean towards him for security.

2. Process of (formula) to finding our purpose.

Here's a simple way to walk through this verse and do the work of figuring out your purpose.

Matthew 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

1. Where are kingdom things happening?

Where and what are the good, life-giving things happening in your world? This is being open to any place God is at work, rolling up our sleeves, and jumping in. This is a life centered in God. And tuned into the world to know where God is at work. There are so many great churches and organizations and we want to be one also. At NCC it's; the Food pantry, The Exceptional Way, Burwell, The Warming Center, benevolences, giving tree, and more. A 'kingdom' awareness where the path towards discovering your purpose is found.

2. How are you developing your 'Jesus awareness'?

For me to discover my purpose was more than just my job in the local church. I needed (still do) to be open and humble to God continually doing a good work within me. The work of discovering purpose is not a 'one and done' deal. It's always changing as each of us grow and mature. And that has to be paired with an equally alive 'inner awareness' towards Jesus. It's not just knowing about Jesus, it's

not just having Jesus in your heart. It's a growing maturity and practice of living as Jesus in your world. So, as you mature, look to live this righteous life, you will also grow a sensitivity to hearing and understanding the voice of Jesus in your life.

3. Where are you looking for those “all these things”?

For me, the “all these things” were just the specifics I tended to stress about, still do, that are important to day to day life. This passage says those will be taken care of if we do the first two things well. The “all these things” are what God wants to give you when you're doing the kingdom and “righteousness” things well. This is our purpose and the life we live. To find your purpose, understand what would bring meaning to your life, you've got to get this order right. And if most of us are honest, it's the “all these things” that often consume our prayer time. “God, answer; “all these things” questions for me!” But this passage says if we seek him, align our hearts, these will fall into place.

IV Challenge.

This is pretty simple...to understand. A little more difficult to put into place. Finding your purpose is the work of detecting and addressing our tendency to drift. Allowing the things of the world to distract and knock us off track. Especially emotional struggles. Things like; fear, anxiety, stress, uncertainty, ruminating, troubles, etc. The problem is we usually can't find our purpose not because we haven't found it. It's, we haven't done the work of last week and removing the distractions in our life. And we 'feel' purposeless because we don't know we've allowed ourselves to not do the real work of moving towards our purpose. Find where God is and join him.

This is also the practice of setting boundaries by asking good questions.

1. What things aren't allowing me to see where God is working?

You don't have to reinvent the wheel. Most likely someone is already out there doing what your purpose is. And if no one is. Then you will be led in that direction.

2. What things aren't allowing me to grow a 'Jesus awareness'?

You have to be building into your everyday life moments to actively grow your awareness that Jesus is in your life leading and guiding you.

3. What things am I missing out on, because they're not the “all those things” God wants to share with me?

Some of “all those things” may be opportunities presented to you that will help you know what your purpose is. Begin to seek out and do these things. And then to find your purpose...do anything that you want that satisfies these things. God's desire for you is not “Let's Make a Deal”. But for you to live this meaningful life you were designed for.

B. Wrap up truths.

1. Have a test to make sure something is of God before you say it's of God. Like; a faithful, dependable religious community, mature friends, an open bible to grow our discernment.

2. You will be good at and enjoy things that may not actually be your purpose. Learn to differentiate between happiness and deep satisfaction. Don't settle for 'good enough'. Your purpose will bring real joy.

It's through this work, if you commit to it, that you can begin to find your purpose...and also joy.