

There Is More

by Ben Zornes

Ben Zornes emphasizes the importance of loving God wholeheartedly and seeking a deeper relationship with Him beyond mere duty or mediocrity.

Duration: 32:12

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4, Psalm 27:8, Matthew 6:33, Mark 12:29-30, John 5:3, Ephesians 3:20-21, Revelation 21:1-4

Topics: "Mediocre Christianity"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that simply going through the motions of religious duty is not enough. He encourages listeners to have a deep and passionate love for God that drives and motivates their lives. The speaker references Psalm 122:1, which expresses joy in going to the house of the Lord. He also highlights the importance of keeping God's commandments as an expression of love for Him. The sermon concludes with a discussion of the first commandment, which Jesus states is to love the Lord with all one's heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Transcript

Let's pray. Oh, Father, I say with the psalmist that my heart is filled with a pleasing theme. And my affection for you rises with the sun.

And I love you. And I confess my love for you here publicly. And just declare that I want to hide myself in the shelter of the rock, the cleft of the rock.

And Jesus, cover me there with your hand. Take a moment and pray for us. That God would do a work here today, this morning.

Our hearts be soft and pliable before him. And then take a moment and pray for me. I am bringing a weighty matter.

And I need grace upon grace to be clear. And articulate. That there be heat and unction upon me.

Jesus, you don't need fancy toys or gadgets or trinkets to aid in the declaration of your gospel. You simply use flesh and blood men. And so, Jesus, here I am.

Oh, may there be an open heaven above me. Lord, I love you. Take this time and use it for your glory.

Amen. Well, I'm excited to hear all the stories and the testimonies from last night. I was telling the people at breakfast, it's debatable who had the better time.

We are all doing the work of God, so it's equivalent, I assume. But we had a profound time here last night. And I'm looking forward to hearing your guys' testimonies over the next few days.

And just the outflow of that over the next few weeks. As we get to interact with some of these folks that you guys were gospeling last night. However, last night we went on a prayer walk.

It was just a lovely night. So we just went down the Poudre Trail. And it was just, oh, it was amazing.

We were just praying and proclaiming the praises of Jesus. And I'm walking along, and I had this moment of panic. It was like, oh, no.

I forgot to ask Nathan Bedard if he could do devotions tomorrow. And so, could you do them on Monday? Great. Okay, thanks.

So we've taken care of that. But I had this moment of panic. Oh, no.

I've completely spaced out. And guess who gets to do it if Ben spaces out? Well, Ben gets to do it if Ben spaces out. So you get me kind of on the fly.

However, God just poured into me last night. During that prayer time and afterwards, there were so many things. He was just pressing on my heart.

So I'm exceedingly glad about what he has me sharing today. If you want to turn to Mark 12. And as you turn there, I don't know if you feel it, but these breaks are so dangerous to your soul.

And it's amazing how easily, how quickly we turn aside. And you just feel that, come thou fount of every blessing. Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it.

Prone to leave the God I love. And it's not that we settle into grievous, Nick calls it, what, debauchery of, what's your term for it? Heathenistic debauchery. It's not that we sink into some grievous sinful state.

But it's the gateway to it oftentimes. When we just kind of settle into mediocrity, we just settle into looking around at each other, putting our thumbs in our pockets and going, well, we don't need to press as hard. We don't need to seek as earnestly.

We don't need to pray as fervently. We don't need to get up as early. We don't need to study as thoroughly.

And boy, that's a trap. And I felt it, and you sort of look at it and you go, Jesus, this life is exhausting. If I look at it in the natural realm, I'm going to be exhausted.

It's no wonder that these guys like Henry Schugel died when he was 28. Jim Elliott died when he was 28. Keith Green died when he was 28.

Robert Murray McShane died when he was 29. I'm going, my time is coming. I'm turning 24 in about a month or about 25 days here.

I'm like, I've got four years left. Oh, no. But I can feel it.

However, Mark 12, let's press hard to know Jesus. And one of the scribes came. What's happening here, the context of this, is all the scribes and Pharisees are trying to trap Jesus.

They're trying to just get him to trip up on his words, and Jesus is too divine for that. And so time and time again, he's, we'll give unto Caesar what's Caesar's. And he answers them perfectly every time.

They think they've got him trapped. They think they've got him pigeonholed. Is that the right word? Stuck in a corner.

They think they've got him trapped. And he gets out of it. Because he knows, he perceives their hearts.

He knows what they're trying to get at. And he answers wisely. And so it says here, And then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well.

So I picture this guy. He's kind of like your average scribe. No one distinguished.

There's nothing distinguishing about him. We don't hear anything more about him, I don't think. He could be possibly Nicodemus, or he could be somebody like that.

But just picture him as like this regular scribe. And he's watching what's going on. And he sees Jesus answering perfectly each time.

Just bam, bam, right straight to the point. Each time. And he kind of gets up the guts like, I think this guy has it.

And I think Jesus would look at this guy and go, He's after my heart. And he says at the end of this chapter, He's not far from the kingdom. And so I just picture this guy getting a little bit of pluck and courage, and he comes forward, and he asks Jesus, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Wait, wait, Jesus, Jesus.

We're in the age of grace. We don't deal with commandments. We don't deal with law.

We don't deal with that. We're under grace. Should I say it? Wrong.

Dead wrong. Jesus says this, The first of all the commandments is this, Your one command, Your one commission, Your one goal and objective in life is this, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord, And thou shalt love the Lord thy God With all thy heart, And with all thy soul, And with all thy mind, And with all thy strength. This is the first commandment.

The primary commandment. The primary thing that your life is supposed to be about. And the second is like, Namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

There is none other commandment greater than these. Nothing surpasses these. And the scribe said to him, Well, Master, Thou hast said the truth.

For there is one God. And there is none other but he. And to love him with all the heart, And with all the understanding, And with all the soul, And with all the strength, And to love his neighbor as himself is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, or wisely, prudently, with discernment, with perception, or as I said before, perspicaciousness. Some of you are like, What in the world does that mean? When

Jesus saw that he answered with such perception and discernment, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any questions.

He answered it so perfectly. He left them speechless. He left them without any argument against his position, against his platform, against his ministry.

In 1 John 5 verse 3 it says, For this is the love of God. We talk about it. We sing about it.

We say it. God, I love you. I love God.

This is the love of God. That we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not grievous.

Do you know what your command is today? And every day of your life? Do you know what the Selah is about? Do you know what these next two and a half weeks that we have here together are about? Do you know what their central theme is to be? Love the Lord your God. He is one Lord. He is one God.

He's not many. He's not divided. He's not saying you can have me and fiddle around with your future dreams and hopes.

You can worship them too. He's not saying, well those of you that are graduating, after you graduate in two weeks here, well then you can start splurging on yourself. And then you can start going back to some of those habits and tendencies.

He's not saying you can have this trinket that you used to this fetish that you used to give way to. And it's fine. We'll just call it a wash.

You just seek me a little bit. I'll let you seek these other things. These other pleasures.

These other lovers that are less wild. It'll be alright. He says, I am one Lord and here's your command.

To love me that your affections would rise up to him. With every aspect of your being. Every inch of your affections and your love and your passions and your mental capacities and your vigor.

That you would love the Lord your God more than you love pushing the snooze button on your alarm clock. That you would love the Lord your God more than you would love a game of ultimate frisbee. That you would love the Lord your God more than you would love sitting around talking.

More than you love doing ministry. That you would love the Lord your God with all your heart. Meaning every affection, every passion, every emotion is so drawn upwards towards him that it leaves no room for passing frivolous passions and emotional instabilities.

You love him with all your heart. Meaning the seat of your emotions, the seat of your passions is ruled and reigned and governed by him. And then you love him with all your soul.

The very core of who you are. The very hopes and dreams. The very essence of your person.

You love him with it. You splurge upon him. You spend upon him.

With all your mind. Oh that our minds would simply be tools in the hands of our king. That we would think.

We would discern. We would meditate. We would reason.

We would accurately handle the text of the word of God. That we would think pure thoughts. And with all of our strength every cell every nerve every sinew every bone and marrow strained with affection for Jesus Christ.

Stretching out to win him. I am, I feel this as I say with Paul, I have not apprehended this. I don't have this in the fullest measure possible.

But I am doggedly resolved that this is my passion. This is what excites me. This is what thrills me.

This is what stirs me. This is what I want to live for. This is what I want to bleed for.

This is what I want to die for. This is what I want to talk about. And I get tired of the frivolities and the trinkets that I so often cling to.

They aren't bad. You guys see me on a daily basis. It's not bad.

It's not wickedness. But it is trinkets in comparison with the treasure. It is a famine in comparison with a feast.

And I just want to love my King. Say, this body, it's all I've got. I want this to be a tool of loving Jesus, for loving Jesus, with the intent of loving him passionately and seeking him earnestly.

No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has perceived. We get so locked into this. I just go, God, why are we so prone to mediocrity? Why are we so prone to settling in? When there is, he's prepared a table before us in the presence of our enemies.

I've been studying Psalm 62, and it talks so thoroughly about his enemies. David's talking about his enemies. They only consult to cast me down.

And I just look around and I go, this world and all the powers of this world, they only consult to cast me down. They are in the business of trying to get my gaze off of Christ. They're in the business of trying to cast us down.

To be able to point at us and say, see, that Christianity doesn't work. It doesn't satisfy. It doesn't invigorate.

It doesn't thrill you. It doesn't satisfy you. And then I love David's response.

He says, In God is my glory and my salvation. He is my refuge and my strength. In God is my strength.

I shall not be greatly moved. Why would I go anywhere else? Why would I hide in any other cleft? Why would I cover myself in any other pleasure? Than the pleasure of His very presence. And so I just go, I want to be there.

God, you're my strength. You're my salvation. You're my refuge.

That is where I must be. That is where I have to live. That is where I have to dwell.

And it is good there. It is satisfying there. His commandments are not burdensome.

They're not weighty. They're not grievous. They're not a drudgery.

I love this scribe's response because he says, Jesus, you said it right. You spoke truth. There is one God and there is none other but He.

And to love Him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the soul and with all the strength and to love His neighbor as Himself, meaning the outflow of that in God-compassion, the impartation of giving God to others, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. To love God is more than any duty you can do, any service you can render to Him, any sacrifice you can make for Him. To love Him wholly with the entirety of your humanity, loving Him, splurging upon Him, feasting upon Him, meditating on Him, dwelling upon Him, seeking His face earnestly.

I think of the brave-hearted thought, seek His face, and I just, I'm just, it's been rumbling around in my mind. Not that you seek God at one time, but are you seeking Him now? Is He your gaze? Are you looking at Him going, I love and I want more. There is more.

And I'm going to stand upon that promise that there is another thousand cubits to go. And I'm going to get in that river once more. And though it may be only at my feet right now, I want to get up to where it's way over my head.

I am dead set on that, and I want you to join me. I want us to recommit ourselves to that. And say, I am after Jesus Christ.

I'm not going to just say we sought Him in the semester, or we sought Him in the last few years. We sought Him then, now we don't have to. Yesterday's unction is good enough for today.

No. God's grace is new every morning. His mercies are new every morning.

Let us seek them afresh and anew. Let us seek them with an earnestness and a desire. And we sing about it.

You, you're my joy. You're my righteousness. You're my all.

You're the best. Knowing you, Jesus, there is no greater thing. Do we mean it? Is it the earnest truth of our souls? There is no greater thing than knowing you in the most intimate way humanly possible.

He has given us power together with all the saints to grasp this. And so I go, I don't want us to be doing this in duty. Sacrifices and burnt offerings count for nothing.

Just getting up at 5 or 5.30 just because you know you have to is not enough. Just getting your homework done and getting your classwork done and then planning for the future is just not enough. If it's just duty, it matters nothing.

But if your soul is consumed, is enraptured, is enlivened, I'm running out of synonyms. I wish I had a thesaurus to talk about this. And I just open it up and start going.

If that is your supreme pleasure and delight, just love Him. Have affection for Him. May it be so driving and motivating and fuel in your life that nothing detracts from it.

Nothing derails it. Psalm 122 verse 1 says this. This has just become the banner.

Last night it was just as I was going, Oh Lord, I've got to give a devotion tomorrow. And this was the verse that just started it all. I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.

Five o'clock and that alarm goes off. More than often I'm not glad. When we have late night prayer times, more often than not, my heart goes, oh, this is what I'm after.

And I want it more fully formed in my life. I was glad when they said unto me. I was glad when my alarm clock went off.

I was glad when we came to stillness this morning. I was glad when we fellowship around the lunch table and we say, let's go into the house of our Lord. I was glad when they said unto me, let us go to the house of the Lord.

What's in the house of the Lord? The very Shekinah glory of God. The very all-satisfying, all-consuming, all-enrapturing, all-beautiful, altogether lovely, altogether worthy glory of God is there in the house of the Lord. So I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.

I want that to be a banner over these next few weeks and over our lives. This is my passion. I'm glad when they say, let's pray instead of play.

I was glad when they said, press in rather than nap. And here's what's so beautiful. Eternity, heaven, the everlasting age is now.

It begins now. Heaven is now. We don't see the full manifestation of it yet, but it's pressing in.

It's coming near. And I go, that's what I love. That's what I am passionate about.

And may the things of this world grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace. And I say, for age after age, eon upon eon, 10 trillion years after 10 trillion years, there's still more. He's a boundless God.

He's a limitless God of infinite pleasures, infinite delights, infinite joys. And this earthly pilgrimage, this earthly sojourn is not the main point. It's the everlasting age that's the main point.

That's what this is all about, is the kingdom of our God. The new Jerusalem coming down as a bride prepared for her husband. Refined, it is clear gold, meaning utterly refined, utterly purified in the fires of intimacy with King Jesus.

And so you heard I gave away what I was going to do here at breakfast. I just want to read some from the last battle. Just, C.S. Lewis was just able to enunciate it a million times better than I'm able to.

About a half hour later, or it might have been a half a hundred years later, for time there is not like time here. Lucy stood with her dear friend, her oldest Narnian friend, the Fauntunus, looking down over the wall of that garden and seeing all Narnia spread out below. But when you looked down, you found that this hill was much higher than you had thought.

It sank down with shining cliffs, thousands of feet below them, and trees in that lower world looked no bigger than grains of green salt. Then she turned inward again and stood with her back to the wall and looked at the garden. I see, she said it last thoughtfully, I see now.

This garden is like the stable. It is far bigger inside than it was outside. Of course, daughter of Eve, said the Faun.

The further up and further in you go, the bigger everything gets. I love this. The inside is larger than the outside.

Lucy looked hard at the garden and saw that it was not really a garden at all, but a whole world with its own rivers and woods and sea and mountains. But they were not strange. She knew them all.

I see, she said, this is still Narnia and more real and more beautiful than the Narnia down below, just as it was more real and more beautiful than the Narnia outside the stable door. I see world within world, Narnia within Narnia. Yes, said Mr. Tumnus, like an onion, except that as you continue to go in and in, each circle is larger than the last.

And Lucy looked this way and that and soon found that a new and beautiful thing had happened to her. Whatever she looked at, however far away it might be, once she had fixed her eyes steadily upon it, it became quite clear and close, as if she were looking through a telescope. She could see the whole southern desert and beyond it, the great city of Tashban.

To eastward, she could see Ker Paravel on the edge of the sea in the very window of the rooms that had once been her own. And far out to sea, she could discover the islands, island after island, to the end of the world and beyond the end the huge mountain, which they had called Aslan's country. But now she saw that it was part of a great chain of mountains, which ringed around the whole world.

In front of her, it seemed to come quite close. Then she looked to her left and saw what she took to be a great bank of brightly colored cloud, cut off from them by a gap. But she looked harder and saw that it was not a cloud at all, but a real land.

And when she had fixed her eyes on one particular spot of it, she at once cried out, Peter, Edmund, come and look, come quickly. And they came and looked. For their eyes also had become like hers.

Why, exclaimed Peter, it's England, and that's the house itself, Professor Kirk's old home in the country where all our adventures began. I thought the house had been destroyed, said Edmund. So it was, said the faun.

But you are now looking at the England within England, the real England, just as this is the real Narnia. And in that inner England, no good thing is destroyed. Suddenly they shifted their eyes to another spot, and then Peter and Edmund and Lucy gasped with amazement and shouted out and began waving.

For there they saw their own father and mother waving back at them across the great deep valley. It was like when you see people waving at you from the deck of a big ship when you are waiting on the quay to meet them. How can we get at them, said Lucy.

That is easy, said Mr. Tumnus. That country and this country, all the real countries are only spurs jutting out from the great mountains of Aslan. We have only to walk along the ridge, upward and inward, till it joins on.

And listen, there is King Frank's horn. We must all go up. And soon they found themselves all walking together, and a great bright procession it was, up towards mountains higher than you could see in this

world, even if they were there to be seen.

And there was no snow on those mountains. There were forests and deep green slopes and sweet orchard and flashing waterfalls, one above the other, going up forever. And the land they were walking on grew narrower all the time with a deep valley on each side.

And across that valley the land which was the real England grew nearer and nearer. The light ahead was growing stronger. Lucy saw that a great series of many colored cliffs led up in front of them, like a giant staircase.

And then she forgot everything else, because Aslan himself was coming, leaping down from cliff to cliff like a living cataract of power and beauty. Then Aslan turned to them and said, You do not yet look so happy as I mean you to be. Lucy said, We're so afraid of being sent away, Aslan.

And you have sent us back into our own world so often. No fear of that, said Aslan. Have you not guessed? Their hearts leaped, and a wild hope rose within them.

There was a real railway accident, said Aslan softly. Your father and mother and all of you are, as he used to call it in the Shadowlands, dead. The term is over.

The holidays have begun. The dream has ended. This is the morning.

This is my favorite of all the Narnia books right here, this last paragraph. And as he spoke, he no longer looked to them like a lion. But the things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them.

And for us, this is the end of their stories. And we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after. But for them, it was only the beginning of the real story.

All their life in this world, and all their adventures in Narnia, had only been the cover and the title page. Now at last, they were beginning chapter one of the great story, which no one on earth has read, which goes on forever, in which every chapter is better than the one before. And Jesus, you are infinitely beyond even that.

We want to be a people that seek your face, that love you with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Oh, let us restlessly and tirelessly go upward and inward, into the mountains of our King. You truly are a living cataract of power and beauty.

And the more we see you, the more we behold you, the more our hearts are so stopped and so awed by the infinite bounties of your pleasure. And so we now just bow our lives before you. And say we want to know you.

Beyond all we asked, or imagined, or can think, we love you. We cherish you. We dedicate ourselves to seeking your face.

And using these bodies to love you. It's in the precious name of our King Jesus we pray.

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