

**Our Purpose and Pathway: Loving God, Loving Others and Making Disciples
Matthew 22:34-37 and Matthew 28:18-20**

*Brad Pitt (Speaking on why he could no longer believe in the God of the Bible)
"I mean if You have to go around saying that I'm the best... It seemed to be about ego."*

C.S. Lewis (Speaking about God's demand to be praised) ... "seemed like a vain woman wanting compliments."

John Piper - At first this sounds like vanity, and has the feel of conceitedness and ...selfishness about it, because that is what it would mean if any of us found our first and deepest joy by looking at ourselves in the mirror. We would be vain... conceited... and selfish.

But why (are we commanded to enjoy and praise Him)? Because we were created for something infinitely better and nobler and greater and deeper than self-contemplation. - What? - The (meditation) and enjoyment of God! Anything less than this would be idolatry. God is the most glorious of all beings. Not to love Him and delight in Him is a great insult to His worth.

So if God loves us enough to make our joy full, He must not only give us Himself; He must also win from us the praise of our hearts - not because He needs to shore up some weakness in Himself or compensate for some deficiency, but because He loves us and seeks the fullness of our joy that can be found only in knowing and praising Him, the most magnificent of all beings.

If He is truly for us, He must be for Himself! God is the one Being in all the universe for whom seeking His own praise is the ultimately loving act. For Him, self-exaltation is the highest virtue. When He does all things "for the praise of His glory," He preserves for us and offers to us the only object in all the world that can satisfy our longings.

Matthew 22:34-37

Loving God, loving others and making disciples is why God created MCC and why we exist in Erie PA.

1. Loving God means we find our greatest satisfaction and joy in Him, our minds are continually on Him, and our will is bent toward Him and His kingdom.
2. Loving others involves our affections, mind, will and actions; focusing on what is truly best for others and their eternity.
3. A Disciple is a consistent follower of Jesus, His teachings and His lifestyle who intentionally invests into peoples' lives to see them love God, love others and make disciples.

Matthew 28:18-20

John 17:1-2 - Jesus said, "Father...Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You. For You have given Him authority over all humanity, so that He may give eternal life to all those You have given Him."

Matthew 4:19

Matthew 11:28-29

4. Walking in the discipleship pathway with God's people at MCC will mature us and motivate us to intentionally disciple others in Erie and beyond.

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Acts 2:41-42 - ...Those who had received the Gospel were baptized...They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Faith Sheet

Series Verse - Genesis 1:26-27 *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."*

#1-Reviewing This Past Sunday Our Purpose and Pathway: Loving God, Loving Others and Making Disciples Matthew 22:34-37

1. Read Matthew 22:34-37 and discuss the message with someone.
2. How did the early church get to the place of loving God, loving others and making disciples? (Acts 1:8 and 2:42)
3. Do you understand the MCC pathway to discipleship and where are you on the pathway? What would be your next step of obedience to keep moving forward?
4. Pray for our journey in the Gospel Story starting next Sunday September 18th and invite someone.

#2-Preparing for Next Sunday God The Creator: In the Beginning, God... The Gospel Story Genesis 1:1-25

1. Read the passage and ask the Lord to reveal Himself and His truth to you. (Genesis 1:1-25)
2. HIGHLIGHT a verse or truth that stands out to you and write it out.
3. EXPLAIN the text in your own words to make sure you see the big picture of God's Story. (Who wrote it? Why was it written? To whom it was written? What is the context? How does this text point to Christ? Etc.)
4. APPLY a truth from the text to your own life. (Focus on what God is saying to you and what is your act of obedience - confession, praise, thanksgiving, etc.)
5. RESPOND in prayer and go live out what God reveals to you.