

LIVING
IT OUT



**DAILY
BIBLE
STUDY**



CEDARCREEKCHURCH

More God, Less Me - What the World Needs Now

June 7, 2021

This weekend, Lead Pastor Ben Snyder started off the weekend talk with this question, “What word would you use to describe our world right now?” As I thought about that question, several words came to mind—most of them not positive. So I am guessing the word you chose is probably not super positive either.

As we begin our new series, *What the World Needs Now*, a song from 1965 comes to mind.

In 1965, the words being used to describe the world were undoubtedly similar to the words we chose for our description of today’s world. In that year, our nation was at war in Vietnam. Many Americans were divided on sending our troops into the conflict. Our country was also experiencing a racial divide. Martin Luther King, Jr, was leading the American civil rights movement. On March 21-25, 1965, he and thousands of others took a historic march from Selma, Alabama, to the state capital of Montgomery. Along the way, they were met with resistance, which became violent. This day is now known as Bloody Sunday and was a turning point in our nation’s history.

In that climate of struggle and divide, Jackie DeShannon’s song “[What the World Needs Now Is Love](#)” was released and quickly became a hit. Millions recognized the truth of this song’s lyrics. Many more became advocates for love and peace over hate and divide. Similarly, today, we see a desire for the opposite of what we are getting.

The question is, how do we get there? How do we get to what the world needs? When I lack something, I try to provide it on my own—and then I try harder. For example, I tell myself: “I need to be more loving.” Or, “I need to be more kind.” But what I find is that it’s never enough. Instead, I am left frustrated.

This weekend, we looked at a verse in the Bible that tells us how to access the attributes that are so needed today.

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace,

patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

At the beginning of the verse, we are told what produces these attributes, “fruit,” that we desire. And this fruit is produced, not by ourselves, but by God.

Ben shared that “where you are LIVING FROM shapes what you are LIVING FOR.” When we live from God —connecting with him relationally, we will begin to see the Holy Spirit produce fruit in our lives. We will see ourselves become more loving and joyful. We will experience more peace. We will see that we have a greater capacity for patience, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

As we begin to live from these places, it changes what we are living for. Yes, we want to experience fruit in our lives, but we want others to experience it too. When we live from our relationship with God, we begin to think about how we can bring this fruit to the world that so desperately needs it. And most importantly, we begin to live for the opportunity to introduce God, the source of *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*, to our world.

Questions:

What word would you use to describe our world right now?

Read Galatians 5:22-23. How do people in our world try to experience these attributes in their lives? How are the fruit listed in these verses actually produced?

How would your life and the world look if more people lived, experienced, and shared the fruit produced by the Holy Spirit?

Next Steps:

Continue to connect with God daily. Read the Bible daily. Pray to start your day and continue throughout. Look through these [prayer resources](#) to help get you started or to give your prayer life a boost.

Commit to attending each service of this series, in person or online.

Prayer:

Dear God, you are what the world needs right now. Forgive me for the days that I make it all about me. Today, I want to not only experience the fruit produced

by your spirit but also share it with the world so others can have a relationship with you, and so they can know the life you have for them. Guide my steps today, help me to live from the love you have for me, and open my eyes to the opportunities I have to share you with the world that so desperately needs you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

This post was written by Ben Bockert, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.

God's Love is Supreme - What the World Needs Now

June 8, 2021

I'm structured with my writing, to the point where I can start a project and meet a deadline (98% of the time). But my process is all over the place. I listen to music to quiet the noise that distracts me from writing, if that makes sense. But not just any music. My style is more jazz than classical.

Geoffrey Gallante said this about jazz: ["It's easy to express your emotions. In classical, ... you get the sheet music, and you read it top to bottom. You're more focused on technically making it perfect ... In jazz, your main focus is ... being creative and using your imagination."](#) My love for jazz is tied to my marriage. We played [*Mo' Better Blues*](#) for our recession song. I listen to the greats, but no jazz artist means more to me than John Coltrane.

In 1957, Coltrane was lost after Miles Davis fired him. So he went on a spiritual journey of discovery. What happened next changed the landscape of jazz forever. Coltrane delivered his greatest masterpiece, "A Love Supreme." The brilliance of that piece came when Coltrane continued to change the key of the motif. Jazz scholar and pianist, Dr. Lewis Porter said, ["This is something very unusual. It's not the way he usually improvises. It's not really improvised. It's something that he's doing. And if you actually follow it through, he ends up playing this little 'Love Supreme' theme in all 12 possible keys. Now he's saying it's everywhere. Anywhere you look, you're going to find this 'Love Supreme.'"](#)

His spiritual journey took him back to God and allowed him to share a universal love. "A Love Supreme" was Coltrane's spiritual ode to God. He finally understood that his love for music didn't start with himself. You can improvise the music, but you can't improvise its source.

Romans 8:11

The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

1 John 4:7a

Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God.

Pastor Chris Brown said, “Love has a source and an example, and it is not us.” Understanding that love is God changes the way you live life. It changes how you see yourself and opens your eyes to what you have to offer. Knowing the source of love is the ending needed for your new beginning.

John Coltrane said it best in a poem that was taken from the liner notes of his musical piece:

“A Love Supreme”

... No matter what ... it is God.

He is gracious and merciful.

It is most important that I know Thee.

Words, sounds, speech, men, memory, thoughts, fears, and emotions—time—all related ... all made from one ... all made in one.

Blessed be his name.

Thought wave—heat waves—all vibrations—all paths lead to God. Thank you God.

His way ... it is so lovely ... it is gracious. It is merciful. ...

His way is in love, through which we all are. It is truly [“A LOVE SUPREME.”](#)

Questions:

Why do you love God? Do you truly know what God has done for you?

Next Steps:

Study your Bible to know the source of love and understand what God has sacrificed for you.

Have someone more knowledgeable walk through Scriptures with you.

Live life with other Christians by joining small groups.

Prayer:

Father God, I often align you with the things in my life that I love without remembering I have these things because of your love. My family, my health, and my possibilities are because of you. I'll respect and appreciate everything more if I take the opportunity to recognize that you are LOVE each day. Thank you for all that I am. Amen.

This post was written by Jaron Camp, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.

God is Love; Love is Sacrifice - What the World Needs Now

June 9, 2021

Lead Pastor Ben Snyder and guest speaker Pastor Chris Brown shared what is at the center of our relationship with God and others last weekend.

Simply put, God *is* love, and God loved us first. We need to truly understand and embrace that truth. Because he was willing to rescue us from ourselves and our sin with a love so deeply rooted in sacrifice that he sent his only son to pay the price demanded for our eternal souls.

Before accepting God's offer of grace and fellowship, I had one motivation: to please myself no matter the cost. I remained a 2-year-old tyrant in a grown-up body ... until our first son came along. Enter God's love. I was willing to sacrifice sleep, fun, time to myself, having a career—everything—to protect and provide for this precious bundle.

First, I endured 40 hours of labor. Then came nursing. I was tethered day and night to the needs of the baby, **not** my own desires. Miraculously, I was happy to do it all, and more, because of love.

Later, when we moved him into a crib in his own room, I was rocking him to sleep when the depth of God's love hit me and I prayed, "Lord, if the salvation of humanity were in my hands, we would all be in hell because I would never sacrifice my son to save someone else." It was then I felt the true depth of these verses:

John 3:16-21 AMP

¹⁶ "For God so [greatly] loved and dearly prized the world, that He [even] gave His [One and] only begotten Son, so that whoever believes and trusts in Him [as Savior] shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send the Son into the world to judge and condemn the world [that is, to initiate the final judgment of the world], but that the world might be saved through Him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes and has decided to trust in Him [as personal Savior and Lord] is not judged [for this one, there is no judgment, no rejection, no condemnation]; but the one who does not believe [and has decided to reject Him as personal Savior and Lord] is judged already [that one has been convicted and sentenced], because he has not believed and trusted in the name of the [One and] only

begotten Son of God [the One who is truly unique, the only One of His kind, the One who alone can save him].¹⁹ This is the judgment [that is, the cause for indictment, the test by which people are judged, the basis for the sentence]: the Light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.²⁰ For every wrongdoer hates the Light, and does not come to the Light [but shrinks from it] for fear that his [sinful, worthless] activities will be exposed and condemned.²¹ But whoever practices truth [and does what is right—morally, ethically, spiritually] comes to the Light, so that his works may be plainly shown to be what they are—accomplished in God [divinely prompted, done with God's help, in dependence on Him].”

I hope you too will accept God's love, Jesus' sacrifice, and the fruit of the Holy Spirit—the greatest of which is love. The life you will live will be priceless.

Questions:

Do you believe God is the source of true love? If not, why? Have you accepted this most precious gift from him? If not, why?

Next Steps:

Check out CedarCreek's Summer Groups. Find one that will help you understand what God has done for you and how it will change or is changing your life.

If you haven't been through GrowthTrack, sign up! Get to know the one who loves you best, and learn this truth: “Come close to God [with a contrite heart] and He will come close to you” (James 4:8a AMP).

Continue the conversation about the Fruit of the Spirit as Ben Snyder and others discuss the attribute, joy on the LivingItOut Podcast. This can be found on the CedarCreek App or at LivingItOut.tv.

Prayer:

Dear Lord, please kill the pride and resistance in our hearts that demand we be the god of our own lives. Lives that you have blessed us with because you love us, want fellowship with us, and will allow us to serve you as your own children if we choose to love you back and worship you, the one true God. In Jesus' name, we pray, amen.

This post was written by Martha Smith, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.

Love God and People - What the World Needs Now

June 10, 2021

The greatest commandment is simple: love God and people. I think, sometimes, it can be over-complicated because we confuse from whom the source of love comes. Guest speaker Chris Brown talked about love—more than his love for fishing or my love for a hot cup of coffee. Love is simple because the source is from God. I say that because when we love, we confuse love with other things. In overcomplicating this commandment from God, we think the source of love is from something or someone. That is not the case, God showed us love first.

We love because God first loved us. As the source of love, God showed us love first by being our savior. It's the reason for the gospel. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us so that we might know and receive his love, even when we did not deserve it. With Christ as our guide, we receive his love and show it to others. This is why love is an action, because knowing the source of love makes you want to share that with others. It comes from God saving us, not so we can “save” others, but this love gives others life.

Luke 10:25-27

²⁵ One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶ Jesus replied, “What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?”²⁷ The man answered, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.’ And, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” ²⁸ “Right!” Jesus told him. “Do this and you will live!”

Loving God and others gives life. When we love God and connect with him, it allows his light to shine through us. It is by loving God first that his love shines through you when you do something to love others.

Questions:

Do you overcomplicate God's commandment?

Do you know God is the source of love?

In knowing that God is the source of love, what are you doing to love God and people?

Next Steps:

Make room for God by showing up in an intentional way in someone's life.

Serve others by participating in Second Saturday.

Prayer:

God, get me out of the way. Remind me that I will not find a true source of love from someone or something, nor am I the source of love. Sometimes, I overcomplicate your commandment because I confuse where the source of love is from. You are love; you are my savior. I know that now, and so I pray that I will make room for your love, and through it, do something to follow your greatest commandment. Thank you, God, that it is simple: love you with all my heart—with everything I am—and love people. It is not easy, because we confuse love with other things, but I pray in knowing this truth that you would show me what love requires of me. In Jesus' name, amen.

This post was written by Becca Roberts, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.

Children of the King - What the World Needs Now

June 11, 2021

As a little girl, I loved to dress up. With my costumes, I became all sorts of people: Princess Leia, Laura Ingalls, Belle, a prima ballerina, even an occasional superhero. But eventually, I grew tired of “being” those people and moved on to someone else.

As I grew up, I found a different way of dressing up. One year, I was the fastest girl in my class; another year, I was the top math student; a few years later, I was the biggest reader in my elementary school. But all of those changed over the years as well. Someone would outrun me, or read more, or get better grades in math. And after every change, I was left a little lost as to who I was.

The bottom line from last weekend’s message was, “Where you are LIVING FROM shapes what you are LIVING FOR.” When you live from the wrong identity, you are consumed with keeping up that behavior. You do everything you can to uphold your self-made lifestyle.

Instead, God gives us a different identity.

Ephesians 1:5

God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

How amazing is it that we are the children of a King? A King who *takes great pleasure* in making us his own. God calls us his sons and daughters. The identities we tend to “dress up” in—boss, bookworm, artist, musician, athlete, chef—can all change. But the identity God has given us will never change.

Once we understand our never-changing identity, we are called to live from it. Knowing who we are in Christ gives us the freedom to love others, because they are God’s children just as much as we are. We can live from who God says we are—his sons and daughters.

It is so easy to get caught up in an identity apart from God. I hung a sign across from my bed to remind me of who I am. It’s the first thing I see every morning. It says, “I am the daughter of a King who is not moved by this world. For my God is with me and goes before me, and I will not fear because I am his.”

Live from who God says you are, the child of a King!

Questions:

What are some of the identities you have been “dressing up” in? How can you remind yourself of who God says you are? Is there anyone in your life that needs to hear what God says about them?

Next Steps:

Find a way to remind yourself of your identity in Christ, like a sign in your room or a T-shirt. Look up some Bible verses that tell you what God says about you. As you go through your week, look for ways you can show God’s love to others.

Prayer:

Father God, thank you for adopting me into your family. What an extraordinary gift! Help me to live from my identity in you, as your dearly beloved child, not from identities I make for myself. You are the only thing that will never change. In Jesus’ name, amen.

This post was written by Lydia Snyder, a regular contributor to the LivingItOut.