

**“LOVED, CHANGED, SENT” #1 -
“Seek Me” / “God’s Glory and Love”**

What’s on God’s heart for us?

- > Listen to his voice in the context of the church / personal life.
- Be diligent in placing yourself in settings in which you can hear from God - slowing down, softening your heart, church involvement, minimizing distractions.
- One time after a busy day of ministry Jesus withdrew from the crowds and went up on a mountain to pray (Mark 6:46).
- Take responsibility for listening to God. You can’t just expect God to spoon feed you by showing up at a church service once a week.
- Make deliberate decisions to pray on your own, to read your Bible on your own, to engage in spiritually helpful conversations with other Christians, and to engage in inner self-reflection with God.
 - ▶ *Psalm 34:10 “those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.”*
 - ➔ *If you want all of God’s goodness flooding your life and soul, then seek the Lord. Participate in prayer and fasting – not to ask God for a list of things you want, but to cry out to him, to open your heart to him, to see him clearly, to see how good his will really is.*
 - ▶ *Jeremiah 29:13 “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”*
 - ➔ To seek God may actually mean learning that God is different than you thought he is, or works differently than you thought he does. He may have higher goals for you than you realize. His love may be deeper and more affectionate than you know. His ways on earth may be messier than you want them to be. His timing may be quite different than you think it should be. Then he will reward you by being found by you.

What is on God’s heart for us, corporately, as a church? Loved, changed and sent. You are passionately loved by God . . . you are called to be changed from the inside out in all you want, think, say and do. . . and you are sent by God into our world to love people and point them to Jesus.

Who are you? Are you defined by the opinions of others? . . . or by their silence and indifference? Is your core identity based on the car you drive, the house you own, and the size of your paycheck? Do you measure your worth by comparing yourself to the abilities of others? When life is harsh, when life is nice . . . when relationships are strained, when relationships are loving – who are you? What gives you worth and meaning? How do you measure success?

- Two lenses through which we must see and understand the world (like corrective glasses - the world is fuzzy, out of focus, until the lenses are used). I can see the world the way God intends me to see it.

➔ **Lens 1: “The Glory of God”.** This reminds us that our ultimate purpose in life must be God-centered. God is the source of all we see and he is the source of all meaning and the source of all living. We have been created to glorify him – which means to know and show that he is great. All of life is about him.

▶ *Romans 11:36 “For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.”* ▶ *1 Corinthians 10:31 “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”*

➔ **Lens 2: “The Love of God”.** This great and awesome God loves us. We’ve been created for relationship with him. When life is crazy and hard and painful, we look through this lens and see that there is Someone who is passionate about us.

- **We are created not only for God’s joy, but for our joy.** “God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.” (Piper). To find our joy in God is to exalt him in our lives. Also, what can give us greater joy than to know that the God of the universe cares about us and acts for our good? God is always compassionately acting in your best interest.
- God’s glory and his love provide a strong foundation when the world is cruel, when relationships hurt, when self-doubt grips your soul.

▶ *2 Chronicles 7:3 “When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the Lord above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, “He is good; his love endures forever.”* ▶ *Psalm 115:1 “Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.”* ▶ *John 1:14 “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”* ▶ *John 17:23-24 “...Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.”* ▶ *2 Corinthians 4:15 “All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.”* ▶ *2 Peter 3:18 “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever!”*

- **So how do we live this way?**

1. Conviction - Becoming convinced that God’s glory and his love are necessary foundations for joy-filled living – and then identifying any current false foundations we tend to live by and reject them.

2. Life-Reflection - Evaluating the many specific areas of our lives and examining what they would look like if God’s glory and love were our foundation.

3. Life-Application - Applying our conviction and our life-reflections in one area of our life at a time - surrendering yourself to the glory of God and his love, living in the presence of God in that area, conforming your desires, thoughts, words and deeds to your happiness in God and his ways. **And then let it become a lifestyle!**