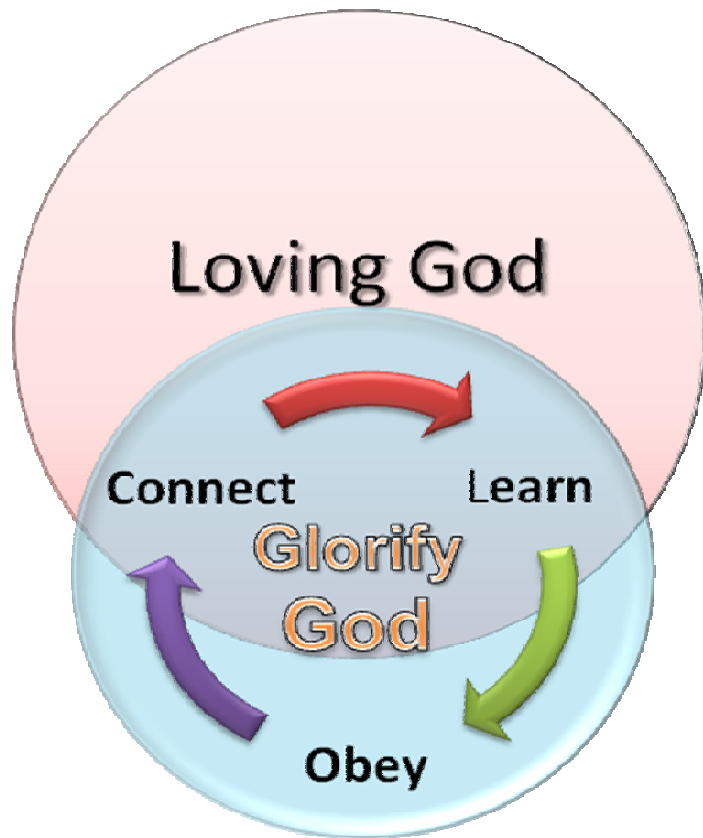


**Sticking with the Mission: “Loving God—Transformed Living”
 Romans 6—Ephesians 5—Colossians 3**

We’ve begun this year by working through our mission statement. A mission statement gives direction and focuses our future. It provides guidelines for decision making and inspires unity. Our mission statement has at the center: “glorify God.” We do this in three primary ways—loving God, loving each other, and reaching our world. This morning we are going to focus our attention on what “loving God” looks like so that we can learn to “glorify God” by loving Him. We love Him as we worship Him and as we become more and more like Jesus.



Spiritual Transformation: Becoming Like Jesus

Spirit of God → Word of God → Christlikeness

Filled by the Spirit

Ephesians 5:15-21 (v. 18)
 Galatians 5:16-26 (v. 25)
 Romans 8:1-17

Principle #1

Dead to sin; Alive to God
 Romans 6:1-23

Principle #2

Take off; Put on
 Colossians 3:1-17

Spiritual Disciplines

Abstinence: solitude, silence,
 fasting, chastity, sacrifice

Engagement: study, worship,
 celebration, service, prayer,
 confession, submission,

Day by Day in the Word

“Day by Day in the Word” is a tool we use to help us in the process of becoming more and more like Jesus and ultimately to bring glory to God. The biblical principle is: The Spirit of God uses the Word of God to bring about Christlikeness.

Monday-Tuesday

- Read Ephesians 5:15-21. What is Paul contrasting? What does it mean to be “filled with the Spirit”? What effects from being filled with the Spirit are mentioned? See vv. 19-21. How is Colossians 3:15-16 similar and different from Ephesians 5:18?
- If you have time, read through Galatians 5:16-26 and Romans 8:1-17. Make observations on the relationship of the Holy Spirit with believers, how the Spirit impacts believers, and the contrast between being led by the Spirit and being led by the flesh.
- How would you explain to someone how to be filled with the Spirit? Do that this week. I typically will use words like: confess your sin, commit your heart and ask the Spirit to empower you, and cultivate godly habits. I also talk about spiritual breathing: exhale (confess sin), inhale (ask the Spirit to empower/fill you), and look at the cross.

Wednesday-Thursday

- Read Colossians 3:1-17 and focus on the “taking off” and “putting on.” Identify the characteristics that are to be taken off and the characteristics that are to be put on. Pick one from each group and define it as clearly as you can.
- Determine how you can actually “take off” a characteristic and “put on” another one. Be as clear as you can. Share with someone what this principle consists of and how they can practice it.
- Read Romans 6 and summarize the principle of counting yourself “dead to sin and alive to God.”

Friday-Saturday

- Take the principle “The Spirit of God uses the Word of God to bring about Christlikeness” and explain it to another individual. Be sure to share how you are seeking to live by this principle.
- Let’s focus our attention today on one of the spiritual disciplines: fasting. Fasting can be defined as “a Christian’s voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes.” What observations can you make from Matthew 6:16-18 and 9:14-15.
- Whitney (see below) identifies a number of purposes for fasting: to strengthen prayer (Ezra 8:23; Neh. 1:4; Dan. 9:3); to seek God’s guidance (Judges 20:26-28; Acts 14:23); to express grief (Judges 20:26; 1 Sam. 31:13; 2 Sam. 1:11-12); to seek deliverance or protection (2 Chron. 20:3-4; Ezra 8:21-23). Consider fasting for one meal this week.

Resources:

Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (Harper & Row, 1988).

Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (NavPress, 1991).

John Ortberg, *The Life You’ve Always Wanted* (Zondervan, 1997).

R. Kent Hughes, *Disciplines of a Godly Man*, rev. ed. (Crossway, 1991).