



## Passionate About Delighting



### {Discover & Discuss}

Opening: At various (and sometimes critical) times in our lives, God will use a specific verse or chapter of Scripture to challenge us or to minister to us. I remember when Jensine and I lost our baby son, Jedaiah, and the hospital Chaplain came in with some flowers and a card with Psalm 34:18 written on it: "The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit." I will never forget that moment or the comfort God brought through His Word. Take a few minutes and have each person share a meaningful verse and perhaps the story that goes with it.

{Read Psalm 1:1-6} Have you ever thought of yourself as "Blessed"? When the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek (known as the Septuagint translation), the adjective used for "Blessed" in Psalm 1:1 ended up being the same adjective later used by Jesus in the Beatitudes for "Blessed" (Read Matthew 5:3-12). Where does the spiritual concept of "Blessed" clash with our culture's concept of "blessed"? In what ways are concepts similar?

Within a week advertisers will spend around \$125,000 per second to get our attention during the Super Bowl; clearly they are vying to influence our purchasing decisions. But what about all the other family, friends, and co-workers that are seeking to sway our decisions, not to mention the media in its many forms. How do you protect your mind from being adversely impacted by evil influencers? Take a moment to share some creative ideas you have tried in order to filter and resist ungodly influences.

{Review Psalm 1:2} Here we are told that a "Blessed" person takes significant pleasure and satisfaction in God's Word. Ultimately our delight in God's Word is a reflection of our delight in God Himself. Would you say that you delight in God's Word, the Bible? Perhaps you would say no: maybe you hate reading, or just view Scripture reading as a chore/duty. It is okay to be honest about your present approach to God's Word; however, we must move toward delighting. Remember, we must devote ourselves to consistent reading, studying, and memorizing of the Bible. Then we need to prayerfully ask the Holy Spirit how to apply what we have read/studied/memorized to our lives. MARS.

If you struggle to delight in God's Word, or if you need to refresh a bit, let me encourage you to take one of the following two challenges between now and March 1st. Either read the Bible for 30 minutes a day for 30 days in a row, OR memorize all six verses in Psalm 1. Choose a partner in your small group to hold you accountable each day via texting, or every other day, on your progress. Memorizing is not as hard as you think; simply write Psalm 1 on a card and review it 5 times per day for a month; you will naturally memorize it. And you will find that devotion will lead to delight!

{Review Psalm 1:3} Would you say that the simile of the tree describes your life? Do you see yourself as a growing, fruitful, and healthy disciple of Jesus Christ? We believe growing disciples must be intentional disciples. As we bring this month of Pulpit Curriculum to a close, I want to challenge you to set some spiritual growth goals for the next three months. Your small group can then both encourage and challenge you to grow forward.

### {Care & Accountability}

In order to be a growing disciple, please take a few minutes and set one spiritual growth goal in each of the following 4 areas.

- 1) Character Quality (Like Patience, or Love)
- 2) Spiritual Discipline (Bible Reading, or Prayer, or Sharing your Testimony)
- 3) Relationship to Develop (with Spouse, or Child, or Friend, or Boss)
- 4) Offensive Goal: Any significant life improvement that will help you be a more effective disciple (exercise, budgeting, date night each week, read a book on biblical parenting, etc.)

### {Take It Home...}

Take your four tentative goals, tighten them (make sure the goals are measurable), and bring them back to your next small group meeting; let others pray for you and encourage you as you seek to grow spiritually over the next few months in 2012!