



BREAKING THE ICE

What's the name of a song from your childhood that brings up memories?

What kind of memories does that song invoke?

MAIN CONTENT

This week, we got to hear from our good friend Annie F. Downs about how to live well. The scripture reference was Mark 12:28-31. Take a few minutes to read through the scripture.

This week, we talked about how to love with our souls. When Jesus taught this scripture in Mark about loving with heart, soul and mind, He quoted some cultural prayers and scriptures from the Old Testament books of Deuteronomy and Leviticus. The command from this scripture is to love - not serve, not obey - but love.

1. What does it really look like to love well?
2. How do you love God differently than you love people?

Loving God with your soul means doing what your heart feels. It's also what you do with what you think about. Our souls are made up of what moves us; it's all the puzzle pieces of our lives that make us uniquely us. It's what makes us laugh and cry.

3. What makes you uniquely you?

In the Bible, when we talk about our souls, it can reference our breath. Even our breath is unique to us. So when you think about your soul, you can ask yourself: "What takes my breath away? What is so moving to me that it makes me sit in awe?"

We can also put our souls into things. How we spend our time will tell us where we put our souls.

4. What do you put your soul into?

How do we love with all of our souls? We trust that we were made on purpose and we surrender.

Nothing about us is accidental. The things that make us laugh, cry and feel are all unique to us. We may not love what has happened to us in our lives, but we were each made for a purpose, on purpose, and we should love what the Creator made... us! We are God's creation and if we love God the Creator, we should love ourselves, even with our flaws.

5. How well do you love yourself as God's creation?

When we love ourselves, our souls get filled up. The world needs each and every one of us. We were not a mistake. God handcrafted each of us uniquely to be a part of this world. If we can't love ourselves (the creation), we will have a hard time loving the Creator.

6. What do you love about yourself, and why?

Another way we love with all of our souls is we take all our unique qualities - all the puzzle pieces of ourselves, our desires, our will - and surrender them to God. When we hold onto any of our pieces, we are trusting in ourselves to do it all on our own, and we miss out on what God has for us. We think this is easier and safer because we are in charge, but in reality it's not. We need to surrender it all to God.

If we want to have full souls, we tell God, "I understand you made me on purpose, for a purpose, and I trust You."

7. Do you know what God's purpose is for you? What is it?

Read Matthew 10:39 in the Message version.

When we ask God for His will for our souls, we are surrendering to Him. He will provide for us. He will take care of us. He is enough.

8. How do you currently live your life with a mindset that God is enough for you?

CLOSING PRAYER

God, thank You for making each of us for a purpose, and on purpose. Thank You for loving us so much and making us uniquely who we are. Help us surrender our lives to You. Where we have puzzle pieces of our lives that we still have a grip on, show us. We want to surrender them to You. We love You and we trust You with our whole souls. In Jesus' name, Amen.

ACTION STEP

- + Write down things that you love about yourself and tell God “thank You” for making you on purpose, for a purpose.
- + The things you don’t love about yourself - ask God to take them from you. Surrender them to Him and ask Him to help you love yourself more.
- + Keep practicing these things until your mind, heart and soul all agree that you were made on purpose, for a purpose and that God loves you. He doesn’t make mistakes and that includes His creation of you. You are not a mistake. You have purpose.