

# 6/4/23- - New Series: "MORE THAN"

## PASTOR LEE

What's our  
faith in  
God?

- Our relationship with Jesus....how defined? Eg... like fire insurance? ('keep me out of hell').....true, faith/trust in Jesus DOES fix our eternity....but...IT DOES SO MUCH MORE!!! And more than just a 'survival strategy' (eg. picking out bible 'nuggets' or quick check-in for Sunday service). Others of us see God as the 'supreme fixer' for our everyday life challenges (kids, health, job, etc.) Sometimes, He DOES grace us with fixes/answers to prayers....sometimes we're looking, defensively, just to assure God's not mad at us...trying to live in 'right', Godly ways. No matter what your perspective, GOD IS SO MUCH MORE".....can't even grasp it!

God  
IS  
Great !!

- Maybe our church/faith-related rules and guidelines , as relevant and important as they are, somehow distort or diminish the unfathomable greatness and holiness of God. To illustrate, Pastor jokingly pulls up hypothetical examples of 'advice' books (eg. "Pray Big" by Bishop R. Mittuch).

Culture's  
Influence

- Diminishing our sights further, we strive often to 'fit' into secular culture performing some sort of 'balancing act'. Result: we fit right in with trends of increased anxiety/depression, even suicide! Medications, self-help/other every day strategies are not off-setting.
- Present culture permeates much of our exposure: talking points like: consumerism, wokeness, climate change, authenticity, burn-out, gender dysphoria, mental health and self-worth as examples. Book: "The Shattered Lantern" (by Ronald Rolheiser)... sub-title: "Rediscovering a Felt presence of God", writer says: "Our lives become consumed with the idea that unless we somehow experience everything, travel everywhere, see everything and are part of a large number of people's experience, then our own lives are small and meaningless". (So true!!!)

Shallow  
Spirituality?

- We Believers most often just add a little extra (icing) on top, and we call that our 'religious experience'. Yet.....this 'experience set' has no life-changing ability at all! Results in disillusionment and a shallowness of quick fix type faith. Social media contributes and distorts our perspectives of what's real and genuine and substantive. We apply this same standards (shallow though they are) to our spirituality.

God  
Provides  
Way  
More!

- However, deep in our core, we do want a closer relationship with God..one that engulfs us and totally enhances our life experience. A precious few, indeed have that closeness...others look on them perhaps with jealousy or even suspicion. So the majority of us are missing out of this indescribably wonderful experience with God.
- In this Series, want to tell you that THERE IS WAY MORE....GOD'S SPIRIT CAN AND WILL TRANSFORM YOU FROM THE INSIDE OUT. When you put your trust and faith in Jesus alone, he not only saved you from hell and give you eternal heaven, He (Holy Spirit) comes into your life, empowering you to live a real 'Christian life'. We have a choice: yes...or....no. Not that you deserve it.....its God's grace through Jesus' blood....not works.....which are, simply, a reflection His grace.
- Ephesians 3:20-21: "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think according to the power at work within us, to Him be be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus through out all generations, forever and ever, Amen." So, God indwells the believer....the moment he begins to trust in the Lord... by His Holy Spirit!. Pastor Lee invites non-believers to talk to Pastors about knowing Jesus. Life-changing! Only then, accepting God's power and grace, can we live 'the Christian life'.
- Question to ponder "what one thing would we like to ask of God? We all have that question....but fact is....He could do FAR MORE than what you could even imagine-

("far more abundantly"!)). Fact is, you can't even think big enough to ask the right question!

Gifts  
of the  
Spirit

- In this context, this is why we want to be a 'Spirit-led Church'! **THOSE WHO LIVE BY THE SPIRIT WILL NOT WALK IN SIN! NOT ON OUR OWN BUT THROUGH THE POWER OF GOD!**
- Lets ask God for repentance and for his Spirit to consume us, move through us and take over.
- Galatians 25:22: "*but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control*"..... . This is what happens when you have the Spirit of God in your life!!
- **LOVE**- - 1John 4:19: "*We love because He first loved us.*" We, ourselves, can't muster up that much love but can imitate with our human best. **GOD IS LOVE...THE VERY ESSENCE...SO MUCH SO THAT HE WOULD SACRIFICE HIS OWN SON!** In our world, love is a 'contingent proposition'.....when it exists at all (except for ourselves!). But God's Spirit changes that....by indwelling within and moving our hearts.
- **JOY**- - Some of us are gradually less happy, more sadness, more responsibility.....our feelings can be so influenced by our daily experiences...how this world is treating us....But in the book of James 1:2: "*Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds.*" So in contrast to 'the accepted norm', joy is **NOT** predicated on what's going on in the world. But in trusting the Lord and with the Holy Spirit in your life, **THAT JOY COMES FROM WITHIN**--irrespective of this world's challenges or even rewards.
- **PEACE**- -We naturally just wish we could have peace (rest/tranquility). We can....with the Spirit of God!
- **Patience**- - So easy to be annoyed....even despite every effort. Not so with the Spirit. Changes entire perspective...not because of your efforts but because of Him.
- **Kindness**- - See Romans 2:4 which says....*Its your kindness that leads us to repentance, Oh Lord.* Its another fruit of His Spirit.
- **Goodness**- - Acting selflessly on behalf of others.....for goodness' sake....unconditionally, because of our love.
- **Faithfulness**- - A consistency in life. We know God will be with us no matter what!
- **Gentleness**- - The term is **NOT** diametrically opposed to leadership which many pursue...**GENTLENESS IS POWER UNDER CONTROL**
- **Self Control**- - Addiction is so prevalent in our world...Satan knows our weaknesses/ attractions: Drugs, sports, computers, porn, games, etc. ....some we just can't control. Self control is another fruit of the Holy Spirit...a natural fruit!

Promise-  
Keeping  
God!

- God, again, can do far more abundantly than we can imagine....in these eight fruits above!.....and beyond!
- Pastor Lee prays over Eph 3:20-21....inviting God's Holy Spirit to move in our lives.