

4Ws PRACTICE A GOD-CENTERED PERSPECTIVE

MAY 8, 2022

WORSHIP

Amazing God, We Praise
Your Name, In Control,
Hear Us from Heaven,
Jesus at the Center

WELCOME

When you encounter
disappointments, do you
immediately recognize
God as being in control?
Why or why not?

WORD

JEREMIAH 29:4-7, 11

⁴ “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon, ⁵ ‘Build houses and live in them; and plant gardens and eat their produce. ⁶ Take wives and become the fathers of sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply there and do not decrease. ⁷ Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.’...
¹¹ For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’”

What do you do when your expectations are not met? When what you like does not happen? The election results for sure will make some people happy; but some people will be sad. What do we do as Christians to navigate through life when we don't get what we want? Disappointment is good for the soul because we are taught to be flexible and adjust. We must **PRACTICE A GOD-CENTERED PERSPECTIVE**. We can all see the same thing but arrive at totally different conclusions. Do you see God at work in your life or not? Sometimes you don't like what's happening but before jumping into conclusions, we must practice a God-centered, rather than self-centered, perspective. A mature follower of Christ sees things as they are but sees through God's perspective. Do not judge God based on circumstances, rather, judge your circumstances based on who God is!

By nature, we are self-centered. We want what we want. But we must practice a God-centered perspective. The Bible tells us in **2 Corinthians 5:7** – “**we walk by faith, not by sight.**” To walk by faith means even if we don't understand the why's, we are able to cling onto the trustworthiness of God. How do we process things in God's perspective? Remember the following:

1. RECOGNIZE GOD IS SOVEREIGN

Many Christians make God to be much like humans. Many are nervous, worried, and tend to forget that **GOD IS GOD** and **WE ARE NOT GOD!** **Daniel 1:1-2** starts to narrate the besieging of Jerusalem, mentioning the powerful king of Babylon conquering the city. However, **v.2** acknowledges that God was the One working behind the scenes, giving over the king of Judah to Babylon. With God's approval, Jerusalem has fallen. He has protected them time and time again, but to accomplish His purpose, He allowed this conquest to happen. In all of these, Daniel was still able to navigate through life (**Daniel 2:21**). **Daniel 4:35** repeats the same principle – God does not need our approval to do what He wants to do. He has every right to do everything because He is sovereign.

In **Psalms 135:5-6**, the psalmist writes that whatever the LORD pleases, He does. People who don't know Jesus rebel against this concept of the sovereignty of God. The truth is His sovereignty doesn't remove human will or choice. In **Jeremiah 29:4-5,7**, we see how God gives a reminder for His people who live in a foreign land, to seek its welfare and praying for its behalf. Coming from this, we are led to an amazing verse (**Jeremiah 29:11-13**). The context talks about the hardships and challenges, but it also assures that God can give us **HOPE**. When God allows trials and calamity, it is to get our attention to turn to Him. Now you begin to see why God allows certain disappointments, so you can turn to Him, seek Him, and find Him, and find rest in His guidance.

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The response to this is SURRENDER – because the greatest good is not the temporal things of this world, but finding God even in dire circumstances, trials, and problems. In the elections, we must also remember that we are given Biblical standards to follow, like choosing people who are with character/integrity and competence (**Exodus 18:21**), honesty, accountability and family values in accordance with the righteous ways given to us in the Bible.

2. REST IN HIS PLAN

Are we truly **RESTED** in God? The Bible gives us a command to rest in the Lord (**Psalms 37:7**). In the worst of situations, we can honestly believe that God is accomplishing His purpose. When we believe that God is in control of our lives, we can rest and honestly say “Lord, I thank YOU!”. For example, some people say “what if the wrong candidate wins and the right one did not win?” The answer is, GOD IS GOD and you are not god! **Romans 13:1-2** is a good reminder for us – we are to be in subjection to the authorities established by God. **A.W. Tozer** said that a Christian who is not obedient to the Word of God is not a true Christian. A disobedient Christian really doesn't fit! God tells us He is in control, and we must respect and be in submission to authorities in our lives! The only time we will not obey them is when issue commandments that go against the word of God! After this election, we rest – be in total submission and pray to God (**1 Timothy 2:1-2**). We must remember to consider it all JOY (**James 1:2-4**) even when we face trials, because these are all tests of faith. It is in these moments that we learn to rest in His plan, whatever it is, it will give us endurance and we will lack nothing – even wisdom, understanding, and complete rest in the Lord.

3. REPRESENT HIM TO THE WORLD

2 Corinthians 5:20 gives us the most amazing privilege – we are called AMBASSADORS for CHRIST. We are the representatives of Christ, more than our politicians, our country, our passions, or even our businesses. We represent CHRIST and the Kingdom of God. Our job is to tell people the important message of reconciliation. That is our primary objective! Learn to vote wisely, but we must always remember that we are representing Christ. May our passion for this election never exceed our passion for Jesus. Our primary mission is to share the gospel for Christ. The power of the **gospel (2 Corinthians 5:21)** can really transform lives, and this is the kind of transformation we Christ-committed followers must be able to carry throughout our days til the end (**Revelation 1:7-8**). Let us be true ambassadors of Christ!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

How do you process disappointments? What do you do when you don't get what you want?

2. Setting It Right.

How do you demonstrate your trust in God's sovereignty?

3. Living It Out.

What can you do to represent Jesus properly?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people who are anxious about the future that they will learn to trust God's hand and learn to rest in His sovereignty. Encourage them through Bible verses that remind us of God's power and goodness. Be an ambassador of Christ by reaching out to people this week and share the good news of Jesus that others may learn to rest in who God is.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- For God's sovereignty to be on display over our upcoming national elections; godly, competent leaders to be voted into government posts at all levels.
- For the Russian invasion of Ukraine to stop; peace and order be restored, lives spared. Russian and Ukrainian soldiers, families, leaders to turn to Christ; refugees be given safe passage into surrounding nations.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

JEREMIAH 29:13

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.