

Diving Deeper into Discipleship for April 17, 2022

Pastor Pete Fowler | *Dethroning Idols: Pathways of Repentance—*

Celebration: Rejoice and Be Glad

Sermon Reflection Questions:

- Thank God for the wisdom of His plan of salvation, His ongoing proclamation of love for His people, and the price paid by Jesus to redeem us.
- Have you responded to the invitation to follow Jesus, to make a commitment to Him above all others?
- Are you remembering the loss of a loved one today? Take heart that someday death will be "swallowed up forever."
- In what ways are you preparing for the marriage supper of the Lamb? How are you making yourself ready?

Devotional Reading and Reflection

- **Hosea 2:14-20** | What does this passage teach us about God's desire to be "betrothed" to His people?
- **Luke 9:57-62** | Does it seem strange that Jesus responded in these ways to people who were seeking to follow Him? Why do you think He did so?
- **1 Corinthians 15:50-58** | In what ways does this passage—similarly to Revelation 19:6-9 and Isaiah 25:6-9—speak to a balance between future hope and present life?

Weekly Spiritual Practice

April Practice: True Service | Selectivity & Function (from *Celebration of Discipline* by Richard Foster, pg. 129)

- If true service is to be understood and practiced, it must be distinguished clearly from "self-righteous service." This month, we will look at several of these differences. Pray that God would allow you to find opportunities for "true service" in your life.
- Self-righteous service picks and chooses whom to serve. Sometimes the high and powerful are served because that will ensure a certain advantage. Sometimes the low and defenseless are served because that will ensure a humble image. True service is indiscriminate in its ministry. It has heard the command of Jesus to be the "servant of all" (Mark 9:35). Brother Francis of Assisi notes in a letter, "Being the servant of all, I am bound to serve all and administer the balm-bearing words of my Lord."
- Self-righteous service is temporary. It functions only while the specific acts of service are being performed. Having served, it can rest easy. True service is a lifestyle. It acts from ingrained patterns of living. It springs spontaneously to meet human needs.