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Meeting location
Marshall Middle School
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Pastor:
John Swanson

*Declaring the greatness of God and serving
others for joy and His honor (II Cor. 4:5)*



April 27, 2000

Dear Friend,

Easter Sunday, as I was explaining 1 Cor 15: 27-28, I was gripped by this amazing good news. God made the world, destroyed the world by a flood but saved Noah and his sons, called Abraham, gave Isaac to Sarah and Abraham, saved Israel out of Egypt, gave them the Law, gave kings to Israel, sent the prophets, sent Jesus, killed Jesus, raised Jesus, listens to Jesus' prayers for his people, will send Jesus back to earth to resurrect his people and destroy his enemies for one reason...that He could be everything to all his people forever. God's goal is to glorify Himself forever by being the all-satisfying treasure to his people forever.

When we adopted as our purpose statement the phrase: "Our purpose is to display the greatness of God." We were right! This is why everything exists and why Jesus came. We've also said our mission statement (How we will accomplish our purpose) is, "We will declare his greatness and serve others for joy and His honor". This is right as well. When we experience and admire God for his mercy and justice we will declare his greatness in our praises and by telling others of his greatness. When God is the all-satisfying fountain, daily quenching our thirst, we will overflow with his love towards others thus glorifying the fountain, not us.

The work of Jesus in our life right now is the same as it will be for eternity. He aims to make God the Father our all in all. The key questions we must regularly ask ourselves are these: Are we displaying the greatness of God by joyfully declaring his praise and telling others his gospel? Are we displaying the greatness of God in our joy-filled, Christ motivated, suffering service to others, beginning with but not limited to those closest to us? (Do I show how content I am with God in the way I relate to a disobedient child? In the way I relate to a co-worker who isn't doing her job? In the way I treat my spouse when they disappoint me or offend me? In the way I spend my time? In the way I eat? In the way I treat members of the opposite sex? These are but a few of the many specific questions that come from the first two.)

When you are discovering God to be your all in all you will hardly notice when others harm you because you are so amazed that God does not harm you for your sin but forgives you and calls you his child. When God is being all in all you delight to show off his grace by being gracious to others. When God is becoming the source of all your joy, you delight to take risks and encourage others to find God to be the source of all their joy. You hate it when you seek your joy in other things apart from God. You hate it when you demand that life go your way before you will be happy, because that despises God's amazing love for you.

You and I are morally obligated to pursue our happiness—in God, with all our might. This is the good news that Jesus brought. Let's be a people that joins in that happy pursuit wholeheartedly.

Depending on grace,