

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church
2080 West Grand Blvd.
Detroit, Michigan 48208
Nathan Johnson, D.D., Senior Pastor

Lesson 13: *Treasures Waiting to be Discovered*¹

Goal: *Build Authentic Relationships by Reestablishing the Art of “One Anothering.”*

Objective: *To encourage Christian believers to engage in and discover the treasures of building meaningful and supportive relationships with one another.*

Overview:

A treasure is defined as an accumulation of stored wealth, both valuable and precious. We as Christians know that the Word of God, which is Christ Jesus, is the most esteemed treasure that we can receive. The Apostle Paul wrote as follows:

⁶ For God, who said, “Let there be light in the darkness,” has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

⁷ We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves. II Corinthians 4: 6 – 7 [NLT].

God’s vast universe is filled with godly people willing to help others by sharing their knowledge of God, His Word, their experiences, and His love for them. We have many brothers and sisters in Christ of various backgrounds and cultures. God designed it this way. “You never know what treasure of God’s glory might sit across from you on the bus, down the hall at work, or even in the house next door. The only way to find out is to engage every person you meet with love, gentleness, and respect; and throughout your journey you will find that God has scattered a vast array of people around your path who hold a wealth of insight and encouragement to help you.”² ‘*Treasures waiting to be discovered*’ was a term coined by Jacobsen and this emphasis is among the major points portrayed in the final chapter of his book, *Authentic Relationships*.³

We are not meant to be alone in our pilgrim journey. God has allowed many people to cross our paths, throughout our lives, who share the joy and common interest of Christ-centered living. This may mean venturing out of our comfort zones. As we grow in relationship with God, we are continually benefitted by mutually encouraging and strengthening others. This is God’s will and His way of unifying our relationship with Him and others through the mediational work of

¹ Jacobsen, W. & Jacobsen, C. *Authentic Relationships: Discover the lost art of “one anothering”*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, (2003). Print.

² Ibid 146

³ Ibid, 145

the Holy Spirit. In this way, we find *treasures waiting to be discovered by taking time to engage in meaningful conversations with one another*. We have different personalities, temperament, and dispositions, but God has placed within each of us treasures that will benefit someone else.

We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. – 1 John 4:6-7 [NKJV]

It is a marvelous experience to grow in Christian community of love and relationship with one another, while growing in the Word, love, and fellowship with God. Many prayer partnerships have been spawned this way. We live in a world that presents many challenges for us and our families. God has placed us here to help one another. How many of us would have given up if it had not been for the fervent prayers of the righteous interceding on our behalf? This is the kind of community God created us to experience. If we are open and alert, we will meet even more people who are just like us—pilgrims on a journey to know Jesus better. Jacobsen stated that ‘*one-anothering*’ begins with what you are willing to give away and by doing so you will find God providing others who will help you.⁴ Jacobsen suggests that as you get to know them better, tell them of your hunger to experience real Christian community and see if they are interested in Jesus centered relationships that offer mutual support and care.⁵ We must be willing to take time to listen, and share our thoughts and words of encouragement. This may be the most rewarding investment you ever made. Someone may find treasures within you.

By obedience to the truth, having purified yourselves for sincere love of the brothers, love one another earnestly from a pure heart...
– 1 Peter 1:22 [NKJV]

Discussion Point #1

In what way can building an intercessory relationship with a prayer partner be a ‘*treasure waiting to be discovered*’?

Praying with partners enable believers to be mutually strengthened and encouraged by the prayers offered on their behalf. Prayer partnerships hold us accountable to one another and to God. Answered prayers serve to build faith in God and trust in the Word of God. Prayer is a powerful way of strengthening one another and others through our testimonies and personal experiences with God. Prayer also fosters our trust, communication, and fellowship with God.

“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” (James 5:16)

⁴ Ibid 147

⁵ Ibid 147 – 149.

Discussion Point #2

How can nonbelievers feel prompted and encouraged to build their relationship with God, by observing you and your relationship with God?

We never know who is watching us. Christians are often closely observed by nonbelievers who form opinions about us, God, the Word, and the church. Sometimes a believer's greatest testimony is a nonverbal expression of what people see or hear about our behavior, support and love for others. We should be mindful of this because in all of our department, we represent the Lord. We are living epistles to those who do not read the Word of God.

“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all [who are] in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” – Matthew 5:14-16 [NKJV]

Discussion Point #3

How does Jesus' high priestly prayer for His disciples reflect authentic Christian relationship?

With this lesson, the series on Authentic Relationships comes to a close. How fitting it is to turn to Jesus' prayer for us. His high priestly prayer is an example for us. It reflects the relationship of the Godhead. It is one of perfect unity. Jesus' prayer included all who would come to know Him through the preached and written Word of His disciples. His prayer reveals spiritual treasures that God wills for us as a community who has accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. There may be someone God is urging you to build a relationship with and evangelize so that they might be a recipient of the eternal spiritual blessings He has in store for His people.

“I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. I pray that they will be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me. I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me” – John 17:20-23 [NLT]

Biblical Exercise:

Identify Pray, Witness, and Invite (IPWI) people to experience a closer relationship with God. Also, pray and anticipate that they will experience and become *treasures waiting to be discovered* by other brothers and sisters in Christ.

Monthly Biblical Lessons

Month	Year	Monthly Biblical Lessons
October	2011	<i>Introduction to Authentic Relationships</i>
November	2011	<i>Loving Others Like God Loves You</i>
December	2011	<i>A Soft Place to Fall</i>
January	2012	<i>It's Not All About You</i>
February	2012	<i>Initial Contact</i>
March	2012	<i>Sharing God's Kindness</i>
April	2012	<i>Lightening the Load</i>
May	2012	<i>Cheerleading</i>
June	2012	<i>Pooling Our Wisdom</i>
October	2012	<i>Taking It To God</i>
November	2012	<i>The Genuine Article</i>
December	2012	<i>Partnering in the Journey</i>
January	2013	<i>Treasures Waiting to be Discovered</i>