

John 17:3 (NIRV)

October 2018

"And what is eternal life? It is knowing you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."

"More important than making Jesus known, is knowing Jesus personally."

At a recent Thanksgiving Banquet hosted by my church, I had the opportunity to briefly share about how God had prepared me throughout my life for the works he has me involved in at the present. It was through this reflection that I realized that I am now starting my fourth year of ministry with Athletes in Action Volleyball. For many of you, this has been a journey that you have been a part of since the start and I want to thank you for your ongoing support. Thank you for participating in the works God has prepared in advance for us to do.



On October 2, Power to Change hosted its semi-annual Day of Prayer. Our speaker was Dorothy Mitchell and I was challenged by the quote above which framed some of our focus for the day. Imagine someone approached you during your day and asked you one question, if there was one, and only one task you could complete today and every other day of your life, what would it be?

Now, if you are like me, your immediate response is probably along two lines of thought. Firstly, you initially know that as a Christian, you should spend time with Jesus. In contrast though, the human side of your brain is probably cycling through all the other things you spend your time on, starting to form an argument for the importance of family, friends, evangelism, passions, work etc..

Having spent 3 years in "ministry," I have experienced the challenges of getting distracted with doing, rather than getting to know Jesus personally. In a book our staff is currently working through entitled, "God in My Everything" by Ken Shigematsu, he observes, as a pastor, that:

"It is possible to engage in a lot of 'spiritual' activity but fail to grow...We can do a lot of spiritual activity and not deepen our friendship with Jesus."



Left: Sharing at a Thanksgiving Banquet

Top Right: Men's Volleyball team at Camp Luther.

Bottom Right: At Bearcat Athletes Retreat.

While I do not want to discount the importance of ministry and sharing the gospel of Christ with others (this is my job and the mandate of the Great Commission after all), I do believe there is an aspect that is easily overlooked. If we don't have a strong personal relationship with Christ we: 1) Start doing things on our own strength rather than His 2) Become hypocrites of what we teach because we don't actually put it into practice 3) Inevitably we look to put our value in something and if it is not Christ, things of this world will readily take his place.

So why do I share this conviction? I do so because I want to be transparent about ministry. In striving to do my job, I can feel like I need to produce Spiritual stories to share with each newsletter in order to prove that I am doing a good job. I do so because I don't believe I am the only one who feels more comfortable telling people what they should do rather than putting it into practice myself. I do so because I believe that if each individual Christian would make knowing Jesus their sole priority, the gospel would overflow from the lives of billions of Christians around the world to impact those who do not know Christ personally.

So, if you only could focus on one task each day for the rest of your life, what would it be?



Updates & Prayer:

As we have transitioned into the school season of the year we are amazed that Annalea is already over 3 months old. Vanessa is enjoying the extra time she gets to spend at home, with family and friends. We are thankful for the opportunity she has to be on maternity leave for the year.

- Praise for the support of each of you in our ministry. .
- Pray that God would help us as we reach out to high school athletes about participating in our trip to Haiti in March 2019.
- Pray for the transition of an AIA colleague, Elodie, as she moves full-time to join our volleyball ministry.

Pray for our staff as we intentionally take time in the next few months to focus on knowing Jesus personally.

We are so grateful for the ongoing support of people like you. Serving Christ together with you,

Jason & Vanessa