

# Home Group Study Notes

for 18/19<sup>th</sup> September 2013

Crazy Love (Chapters 2 and 3)

## Reality Check



*At our joint meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> September, we thought a little about how we approach God. Do we do so routinely, or before we pray do we really consider to whom we are talking – our loving Lord, immense in power and authority?*

*This week we want to consider our priorities in the light of the filter of God's absolute and unlimited love for us. We can so easily get distracted and so settle into a shallow existence of our "N'orn Ir'n" (good living, attending church and saying our prayers) type of Christianity. Of course these are all important parts of the Christian life but Jesus never identifies them as most important. Instead, He points us to love for God.*

**Read:**

James 4:13-14.

1 Cor 3:13-15

Apart from the negative influences which we know are sinful and should not pursue, legitimate things in our lives may take our eyes off what is most important if we begin to view them and use them in the wrong way.

- Why do you think that these good things in our lives have come to distract us from what is most important?
- If today were the day you died, what would you regret, and what changes would you make to avoid those regrets

Francis Chan says "One telltale sign of misplaced priorities and a misunderstanding of your role in the universe is stress or anxiety."

- Whilst recognising that there is a need for 'healthy' stress, what are the sources of unhelpful stress and anxiety in your life?
- It's easy to say 'stop being anxious; just trust God', but practically what can you do to remind yourself of God's care and your dependence on Him in the midst of these stressful situations?

'Most of our lives look more like demonstrations of our own independence..'

**Read:**

Mark 12:30

According to Jesus, this is the most important commandment in the Bible. Intellectually, we know that God loves us and that we should love God, but has this command really seeped through into our hearts as individuals? We can worship and obey Him either through fear/duty or from love.

- Compare/contrast how these might look and feel different. (Talking about the difference between obeying through duty and love, Francis describes the time he 'got it' in his heart, mind, and soul. If you have experienced this too, why not encourage others by sharing your experience?)

**Read:**

Psalm 40:5

- Consider what God has done for you: think about/share the gifts, events, relationships, and other blessings from God that show His love for you. Be specific.



# Points to Ponder At Home:

## Chapter 2:

- Is my life all about me or about God and His glory?
- Read James 4:13-17. He is reminding us that our lives are a gift from God and that we are dependent on Him. It is not about us. (If you have a Crazy Love book, you'll find a good illustration on pages 42-43.)
  - What is James warning against? What is he calling us to do?
  - In the midst of your current life situation, what do you think he would tell you to avoid? What do you think he would tell you to pursue?
- What would it take to adjust your lifestyle and mentality in order to put the most important things back in their proper place?
- What are the sources of stress and anxiety in your life? Make some notes to help you begin putting your stressful situations in the right perspective. It may be helpful to discuss this with a trusted friend or one of our church elders/pastor.

## Chapter 3:

Francis Chan: "The reality of God's love hits us even harder when we begin to see how important God is..... Most Christians would say that God is the highest good in the universe. But think about that statement for a while. Can you honestly say you believe that God is greater than any person, possession, career, or goal in the world? Can you say with complete integrity that He deserves every bit of your devotion, every ounce of your love, and every moment of your time? I'm not asking you whether your devotion to God is complete (Jesus is the only one who has ever done this perfectly); I'm asking whether you believe that God is worthy of your complete devotion. Take time to seriously consider this question."

- Can you honestly say that you believe God is the greatest good in the universe? If not, what keeps you from affirming this? If so, what makes Him the greatest good?
- During the week, take time to increase your intimacy with God by reading your Bible, praying, singing, meditating on all the things you have been considering in Home Group, or doing some other activity that helps you draw close to God. The important thing is that you purposefully draw close to Him and enjoy His loving presence.