



## UPCOMING DATES ...

Heart for His House – 25 June  
Young Families BIG B'Day Bash – 25 June  
Special Guests Kelvin & Bek Windsor – 9 July  
Valiant Man – 17 July (Monday nights)  
INCollege Semester 2 – 30 July  
New Service Times – 8.45am, 10.45am & 5.30pm  
Kids "Blast" (Kindy to Yr 6) – Sunday nights  
Christian Character Course – register online  
Imagine Recovery – Every Thursday Night

## 2017 – CG Notes #14

### STRONGER by Seeking God Passionately & Personally

**Title: With All My Heart**

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#### **Key Scripture:**

*Jeremiah 29:12-13 NKJV*

*12 Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.*

The prophet Jeremiah was uniquely chosen by the Lord to speak on God's behalf to the people. Jeremiah, like most other prophets, faced a great deal of resistance and his burden was multiplied as certain false prophets also opposed him. But in the midst of all of this, Jeremiah brought a message of hope and restoration. Jeremiah 29:11 is a favorite verse with the promise of hope in the unswerving plans the Lord has for us.

Jeremiah continued to speak on behalf of the Lord in our key passage, verse 12 -13. The Lord had promised good to the people – a future and a hope. Now it was their opportunity to respond. The Lord told them what to do and what to expect:

- Respond to My goodness by calling upon Me, pray to Me
- When you do, I will listen to you
- Seek Me and you will find Me
- Search for Me and when you do, do it with all your heart

Other translations of verse 13 help us to better understand what it means to seek and search for the Lord.

***Amplified Bible:***

*13 Then [with a deep longing] you will seek Me and require Me [as a vital necessity] and [you will] find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.*

***Message Bible:***

*“When you come looking for me, you’ll find me.*

*“Yes, when you get serious about finding me and want it more than anything else, I’ll make sure you won’t be disappointed.”*

**Discuss:**

1. How would you define what it means to truly seek God?
2. Some people will seek after God only when they feel it's necessary, e.g. a life crisis or other emergency. God is gracious and so often we witness His mercy in these situations.

Discuss the benefits of being more than a casual or “emergency seeker” of God.

What advantage is there for the Christian who consistently searches after God and cultivates the desire for more of Him?

## Seek God passionately

What does it mean to be passionate about something or someone? We use this word a great deal and we run the risk of diminishing its potency. The word is nearly cliché. Everyone is passionate about something or another – favorite sports team, hobby, music, foodies and their favorites – whatever is the latest thing – the list goes on.

### Passion can be defined as:

- A strong feeling or emotion
- A focused interest in something
- A strong commitment to a goal
- The desire between lovers
- The passion, that is the suffering of Jesus on the cross

Passion can be most simply defined as **intense love**.

We understand that the greatest of all love exists between Christ and His bride, the Church.

Paul, explained practical truth to the Ephesians regarding marriage and family matters – the love of the husband for his wife and the respect a wife is to give her husband, then sums it all up by reflecting it back to the profound mystery of Christ and the Church. (See Ephesians 5:32-33)

### Discuss:

Once again we discover that God is the initiator of the relationship. He intensely loves us and has demonstrated His love for us through Christ. (See Romans 5:6 )

It's wonderful to know this truth but such love requires a response. Is it possible that our love relationship with the Lord could become one-sided?

- How should we respond to such great love as this?
- Although we are incapable of loving God as purely and truly as He loves us, what are some ways we can personally and practically demonstrate our love for Him?

## With all your heart

Robert Murray McCheyne (1813-1843) was a Scottish pastor with a heart after God. He often taught from the Song of Solomon and in it he saw an allegory of Christ and His love for the church. He wrote:

“There is no book of the Bible which affords a better test of the depth of man’s Christianity than the Song of Solomon. If a man’s religion be all in his head, a well-set form of doctrines built like mason-work ... stone above stone, but exercising no influence upon his heart, this book cannot but offend him; for there are no stiff statements of doctrine here upon which his heartless religion may be built.”

“But if a man’s religion be **heart religion**; if he hath not only doctrines in his head, but **love to Jesus in his heart.**”

“It contains the tenderest breathings of the believer’s heart towards the Saviour, and the tenderest breathings of the Saviour’s heart again towards the believer.”

### Discuss:

We understand what McCheyne meant by “religion” – meaning beliefs and practices of faith.

- Discuss the differences between a “religion in the head” versus a heart religion.
- How can we make the shift from the head to the heart?