

Pursuing Your Passion

On Sunday, we concluded our sermon series based on Brené Brown's book *The Gifts of Imperfection* by focusing on Guidepost 9: Cultivating Meaningful Work . . . by letting go of Self-Doubt and "Supposed To."

1. Warm-up Question: What is something quirky and unique that God built into you when you were created?

2. All of us want to do meaningful work in our lives. We want our lives to count – to make a difference. Brené Brown offers three suggestions that can help us find a deep sense of meaning in the work we do. **Principle No. 1 – Pay attention to your creation blueprint and follow it as best you can.**
 - a. In Jeremiah 1:5, God says, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you." "Consecrated" means "dedicated to a sacred purpose." In your heart of hearts, do you believe that, before you were ever born, God dedicated you to a sacred purpose? Why or why not?
 - b. Psalm 139:13 says, "It was you, O God, who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." Does that mean God pre-designed every aspect of who you are, including physical and personality details? Do you feel like you are "fearfully and wonderfully made?" Why or why not?
 - c. Jeff said, "If God knew you before you were formed and formed you as you are for specific purposes, then the best way to fulfill God's will for your life is to be yourself." Jeff shared a story about how fascinated he was with the craft of preaching even as a kid. It was for him an early hint about his sacred purpose. Looking back on your early life, do you see hints of your sacred purpose?
 - d. Take a moment to silently ponder these four questions.
 - ✓ What am I really good at?
 - ✓ What am I really bad at?
 - ✓ What am I really passionate about?
 - ✓ What am I dispassionate about?

Do your answers to these questions provide clues as to your sacred purpose?

3. **Principle No. 2 – Never get trapped in others' expectations; only you and God can figure out who you were meant to be.** Read Mark 3:19b-35.
 - a. According to this passage, why did Jesus' mother and siblings feel the need to "restrain" him?
 - b. How do you think this made Jesus feel?

- c. Based on what's said in this passage, what was Jesus' apparent response to his family? What should we learn from his example?
 - d. Have you ever experienced a lot of pressure from your family (or other significant people in your life) to become something you're not? How did that affect you? And how did you respond?
 - e. Some occupations are considered high status, others not. How has our culture's definition of "success" affected your career path?
 - f. Brené Brown encourages us to think of our life's work broadly as including, but not limited to, our careers. For some of us, our most important life's work may coincide with our job, and for others it won't. How would you complete the following sentence: To the best of my current understanding, my life's most important work is _____.
4. **Principle No. 3 – Don't play it too safe; don't be afraid to take a few flying leaps of faith during your life!** Read Matthew 4:17-23.
- a. If you had been Simon Peter in that moment when Jesus looked him in the eye and asked him to make a radical change in his career and lifestyle, how would you have felt? What emotions do you think Peter felt?
 - b. What do you imagine Peter's family and friends thought?
 - c. Why do you think he did it?
 - d. Suppose he had said no. How might he have felt in the years that followed?
 - e. In the movie *We Bought A Zoo*, Benjamin Mee says, "Sometimes all you need is twenty seconds of insane courage. Just literally twenty seconds of embarrassing bravery. And I promise you, something great will come of it." What episode in your life does this quote remind you of?
 - f. At this moment in your life, do you find yourself being called to take any flying leaps of faith? If so, tell us what you're facing and feeling.
 - g. Take a look at the Charles Schultz cartoon on the next page. When you get to heaven, can you imagine God giving you a big kiss and saying to you, "Thank you for being you!" Do you feel you're "being you?" Why or why not?

Thank you
for being you!

