



SATURDAY 07.16.11 Matthew 16:24-25

Song: "So Long Self"

In this scripture from Matthew, Jesus tells us to deny ourselves, to pick up our cross, and follow Him. Bart Millard, in his song "So Long Self," defines this scripture by comparing it to a break-up. Just as we may have had to break off a relationship with a boyfriend or girlfriend because they weren't good for us, we must break-up with our earthly selves. Only then, can we truly follow Christ.

- When we think of sin, we tend to think of the obvious sins of murder, stealing or adultery. But Satan often tempts us with more subtle sins such as self-indulgence, self-confidence (depending upon our own strength) and selfish desires. These "self" sins are roadblocks to living a fruitful life. Take time to examine which of these you struggle with the most. What steps can you take in overcoming these sins?



SUNDAY 07.17.11 Romans 5:8

Song: "Beautiful"

In his song, "Beautiful," Bart Millard tried to teach his children (and his listeners) that though Satan would try to say otherwise, God loves them just as they are. Just as the scripture from Romans tells us, no matter what we've done or what the world tells us, God still loves us all enough to die for us.

- A line from the song states that "[we] were meant for so much more than all of this." What is the "all of this" to which Bart refers? What is the "more" to which he refers?
- Are there people in your life who need to be reminded that they are beautiful? Beautiful in God's eyes AND in your eyes? Take time each day to remind them.



GROW. PRAY. STUDY.

Top Ten: The Stories Behind the Songs - Weekly Guide 7/11/11

Title: "Beautiful"

Singer/Songwriters: MercyMe

Album: The Generous Mr. Lovewell

Song #8

Romans 5:8

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

"Beautiful" excerpt

Before you ever took a breath, long before the world began
 Of all the wonders He possessed there was one more precious
 Of all the earth and skies above, you're the one He madly loves enough to die

You're beautiful, you're beautiful
 You were meant for so much more than all of this
 You're beautiful, you're beautiful
 You are treasured, You are sacred, You are His

Things I'd like to remember from this week's study:



TUESDAY 07.12.11 1 John 4:7-12

Song: "The Generous Mr. Lovewell"

The fictional "Mr. Lovewell" depicted in this song wakes up each morning knowing he will be a blessing to someone that day. A line in the first verse says, "He never wonders IF, but WHEN." He is never surprised when opportunities arise because he expects to have them.

- If you were to live your life as a "Mr. Lovewell," how would your perspective on your life's purpose change? Would KNOWING that God will use you (not just wondering if He will) cause you to view the things that happen in your life in a different way?
- In the scripture from first John, we are reminded that if we love one another, God abides in US. With this in mind, what then is true about when we DON'T love?



THURSDAY 07.14.11 Isaiah 55:8-11

Song: "Word Of God, Speak"

Bart Millard drew upon this scripture from Isaiah during a time when he felt as if he had nothing more to give; as if he had nothing else to say through his music. This scripture quickly reminded him that it wasn't about him and what HE had to say, it was about GOD.

- During those times in your life, when you feel empty and of no use, lean upon these words: *"[My word] will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."*
- God's word, like seeds, will take root in our hearts and help us to achieve His purpose in our lives. With this truth in mind, start to compile a list of scriptures to which you can turn when you need to hear God speak to your heart. Start this list TODAY.



WENESDAY 07.13.11 Philippians 2:9-11

Song: "All Of Creation"

This scripture from Philippians gives our lives purpose: to praise the name of Jesus. In his song, "All Of Creation," Bart Millard repeats the sentiment: *"The reason we breathe is to sing of His glory. And for all He has done - praise the Father, praise the Son and the Spirit in one."*

- If we live a life in praise of Christ and His grace, what spiritual fruits might begin to grow?
- In what ways would love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control be acts of praise?



FRIDAY 07.15.11 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Song: "Bring The Rain"

This scripture from Thessalonians encourages us to praise God not just in the good times, but in the bad. We are to "In everything, give thanks." This is so contrary to ordinary life, where it is perfectly normal to blame God when trouble hits. MercyMe's song "Bring The Rain" was written during a time of trial. The song declares that if the storms they (the band members) experience bring glory to God, then "bring on the rain."

- Scripture tells us that God "inhabits" our praise. Knowing this, how might praising God in the midst of our trials be helpful?
- Knowing that life is bound to bring difficult times, what is your "plan of attack" for dealing with the difficult times? How might your plan enable you to say, "bring the rain"?
