

What Do You Need?

Introduction. When you woke up, what was your first thought of the day? Was it, “How can I pay rent this month?” Was it, “I’ve really got to schedule some time off?” Each of us has something that we think we need. Today, like every other day of the year, you could probably give anyone a list of your needs and wants.

But you’re here today partly because you realize that this is the place to focus on what you really need. That laser focus alludes us sometimes, so we’re going to contrast what we think we need with what we really need.

I. Common Needs of Everyone Here Today

- A. Some things people think they need aren’t that important.
 - 1. I need a new car, tv, or toaster.
 - 2. I need a new job.
 - 3. I need a little fun in my life.
 - 4. I need romance.
 - 5. I need friendship.
- B. Some of the things people need are more deeply felt than others.
 - 1. I need a job (Ephesians 4:28).
 - 2. I need a way to feed my family (1 Timothy 5:8).
 - 3. I need to provide my family with clothing and shelter (1 Timothy 6:8).
 - 4. I need health insurance (1 Corinthians 6:19).
 - 5. I need help with my responsibilities (1 Timothy 5:16).
- C. However, no matter how seriously we need things, our attention seldom gets to the “heart of the matter” – to our greatest needs (James 4:1-3).
 - 1. We’re eternal past the grave, and will either live in heaven or hell, so our greatest needs are the spiritual kind (2 Corinthians 5:8).
 - 2. Our earthly bodies with all of their needs, passions, and longings are only temporary (Psalm 90:10; 102:3; 2 Corinthians 5:4; James 4:14).
 - 3. When it comes to our needs, we definitely need to be thinking “big picture” (2 Corinthians 4:18; 5:7).

II. Real Needs of Everyone Here Today

- A. Everyone needs the forgiveness of sins.
 - 1. Everyone has sinned (Romans 3:23; James 3:2).
 - a) Sin is acting in a lawless or non-authoritative way (1 John 3:4).
 - (1) There are sins of omission (omitting things commanded).
 - (2) There are sins of commission (doing what’s forbidden).
 - b) Sin is also described as transgression (going beyond the limits set by God) and trespass (crossing over a boundary set by God).
 - 2. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). The answer is repentance (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 3:19). You need your sins removed so that you can enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 7:21-23).
- B. Everyone needs freedom from guilt and shame.
 - 1. Peter wept bitterly over his sins (Luke 22:62; cp. Psalm 51:3; Isaiah 6:5).

2. Imagine the crushing feeling of guilt the people on Pentecost felt when they learned that they had crucified the Son of God (Acts 2:37).
 3. Guilt and shame are functions of the conscience. A sinner with a good and honest heart suffers from a wounded conscience. Baptism is the way the sinner appeals to God for a good conscience (1 Peter 3:21).
- C. Everyone needs mercy.
1. Mercy is a kindness that's extended by one who feels the misery you're suffering.
 2. When you feed a hungry, homeless man, you don't ask first what his situation is. You don't feel around for whether or not he did this to himself. You simply recognize that a human being is suffering and needs help, so you help him (Luke 10:37).
 3. It's a beautiful image that our high priest is merciful and compassionate (Hebrews 2:17; 4:16). We need mercy because we have failed so often.
- D. Everyone needs devotion.
1. "Devotion" means "love, loyalty, or enthusiasm to a cause" (1 Corinthians 16:5; "determined" in Acts 15:2). When speaking of devotion to God, the primary text is Matthew 6:33.
 2. Devotion means that someone must be willing to take up their cross, deny themselves, and follow Jesus at all cost (Luke 9:23).
- E. Everyone needs hope.
1. One of the most terrible consequences of sin is the feeling of terror and hopelessness that nothing will ever be okay again.
 2. When the judge or jury pronounces one "guilty," there must be a feeling of insurmountable despair.
 3. But hope is found in the gospel (Romans 8:22-30). Jesus, through His death on the cross presents us holy, blameless, and above reproach in His sight, so long as we continue in the faith and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel (Colossians 1:22-23).

Conclusion. The church functions as God's intermediary to fulfill the deepest needs of mankind. And that need can be fulfilled as we assemble today. If you want to talk to us about receiving the release of guilt and shame through the forgiveness of sins, or of how you can have hope for eternity, then come while we sing our last song.

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