

CROSSROADS BIBLE CHURCH

GROWTH GROUP CURRICULUM

October 21, 2018

“SENT” - Week 4

For more information or to join a Growth Group, please visit our Growth Group page online at cbclife.org/groups or call the Church Office at 408.288.4115.

Reminder: Don't feel the need to get to every question. Use this resource as a guide but feel free to ask questions that may be related to the topic but have some special applicability to your group.

Quick Review

These are “soft-ball” questions designed to do two things 1. Get people talking. 2. Serve as refresher or review for those who don't recall the message or for those who missed Sunday's service.

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?
2. What adjectives immediately come to mind to describe a person who recently served you or blessed you in some special way? How did their blessing make you feel?

My Story

1. On Sunday, we learned from Pastor Nanda the following traits of a true servant:

- True servants exemplify LOVE for others.
- True servant demonstrate inner STRENGTH (i.e., strong direction, strong authority, strong identity, and genuine security)
- True servants serve IMPERFECT people.
- True servants don't put their service on DISPLAY.
- True servants meet other people's NEEDS.

Which of these is the most challenging for you? Why?

1. All it takes today is a quick read of the news to see the continuing erosion of kindness and respect in our culture. We have become, as the Bible warns, “lovers of self” rather than “lovers of God”(2 Timothy 3:2). Even those in position to give, and to give abundantly, will only do so if the spotlight is shined on their good deeds for the entire world to remark and admire. Was it really any different in Jesus' time? Read Luke 22:24, and comment on the disparity between the behavior of the disciples and Jesus' actions in John 13:3-5.

[Luke 22:24 \(NASB\):](#)

And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest.”

John 13:3-5

³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God, ⁴ *got up from supper, and *laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself. ⁵ Then He *poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

It wasn’t really so different in those days except we have better technology today to quickly disseminate information about each other. As we look at the disciples, it’s remarkable that after walking with Jesus for so long, they missed the target in such a big way, even with Jesus right there with them. Apparently, none of the disciples were washing each other’s feet, because like children they were busy debating who was the greatest. Of course, it’s unlikely that any one of them would object to washing Jesus’ feet, as it would clearly show Jesus “who was the greatest among them.” But to wash each other’s feet would be an admission of inferiority, especially to the other competing disciples. As Christians, we certainly would have no problem if Jesus were to ask us to do something. It’s a chance to show Him just how good we are. But to serve our brother or sister in some menial capacity? Oh, heck no. This is where our pride, like that of the disciples, takes control.

In stark contrast, in almost a series of still shots etched in John’s memory as he pens the gospel, we see Jesus preparing for the washing of the disciples’ feet, each step measured with infinite love as He gets up from supper, lays aside the garments, takes a towel, girds himself, and pours the water of cleansing – all this despite the impending hour that would bring Him to the violence and victory of the Cross.

-Was there a time when you served others to elevate yourself before the eyes of your family, friends or church leaders? How did it make you feel afterward?

-What would you do differently if given the opportunity to do it again at this moment, knowing that Jesus washed us and died for us?

Digging Deeper

1. Read the second part of John 13:1 from our study again. What does John tell us about the love Jesus had for his disciples? What do you think it means to love someone to the end?

John 13:1 (NASB)

⁵ It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. **Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.**

The verse first tells us that Jesus “loved His own who were in the world”. The disciples were **His own** because He chose them, He gave Himself to them, the Father gave them to Him, and because He would soon purchase them at a dear price. Jesus had **loved His own**, but He hadn’t finished loving them. He would love them to the end. The idea behind the phrase **to the end** is to the fullest extent. Jesus just didn’t love his disciples only while he was on earth, but He loved them unconditionally without terms or limits – eternally. It isn’t a love that is fleeting, that is on display today and gone tomorrow. Remember, this is the critical evening before the torture of the cross. Jesus didn’t even think of Himself. He thought about His disciples. Truly, this was a sacrificial love.

-Why do you think John prefaced this passage with this image of Jesus’ love?

*Hint: Read John 3:16 and Matthew 20:28 as you consider the question.

John 3:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that He gave His ^{1a}only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Matthew 20:28 (NASB)

²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His ^{1a}life a ransom for many.”

Though the disciples would later give up on Him, even deny Him, He never gave up on them, never stopped thinking of them, not even at the 11th hour. It was a love that surpasses all understanding for us that brought to “wash” us of our sins and save us from the rightful judgment that we otherwise deserved.

-In what ways could you love someone to the end as you live out your life?

The question should engender uneasiness as it challenges us to step out of our comfort zone. This type of love is a “forever”, covenantal love that will never leave us or forsake us. If we are to reflect this type of love towards others it will be challenging. Sometimes God will call us to love people who are unlovely, or who don’t love us back. It is important to remember Jesus love so we can emulate his patience and sacrifice.

2. One of the most compelling images in the entire Bible is Jesus washing the feet of his disciples. He knew that He had all authority from God, and yet he chose to humble Himself and serve. He knew He would be betrayed, and yet He chose to serve the one who would betray Him. Read Phillipians 2:3-8. Do you think Jesus’

awareness of His divine identity helped enable Him to undertake this humble act of service, or did it make it more difficult for Him?

Phillippians 2:3-8

³ Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; ⁴ do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

In one sense, Jesus committed this humble act of service despite His awareness of His true identity as the eternal Son of God, equal to God the Father (Philippians 2:6). In another sense, Jesus was enabled to undertake this humble act of service because He knew His true identity. Consequently, serving the disciples as He did was not a threat to Him: He did not suffer from a sense of insecurity or a fear of loss—He knew who He was and what the Father had given Him, and this knowledge and confidence gave Him the freedom to serve.

- Look at the verses below and see if you can come up with a quick “job description” for a Christian.

Ephesians 2:10, Titus 2:14, John 13:35, Matthew 5:14-16.

Ephesians 2:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Titus 2:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to **purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.**

John 13:35 (NASB)

³⁵ By this all men will know that **you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.**”

Matthew 5:14-16 (NASB)

¹⁴ “You are the **light of the world.** A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵ nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ **Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.**”

- Can you think of anything from these verses, or elsewhere in the Scriptures, that will tell us where we get the power to do the work that we have been called to?

Our identity in Christ empowers us to love, "for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). Living out love as outlined in the widely quoted 1 Corinthians 13 is not as impossible as it may first appear to be. If we are created in God's image, the doing of love comes down to walking in our actual identity as sons and daughters of God (who is love). And knowing our identity empowers us to act in and with love even if we don't "feel" love.

We need to fully recognize that our identity in Christ equips, empowers, and elevates us to love God and love people. Just think of the power of a job title. When you put on your Director of Finance hat on, because you are qualified to do so based on your credentials, aren't you empowered to fulfill that job? Likewise, our credential is that God chose us, paid a price for us, loved us, and who calls us His children. Our identity in Christ therefore demands us to put on Christ in all we do.

-As the question is often asked, "if you were arrested for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?"

This is a moment of self-examination to reflect on what evidence we think others would see to call us "Christian". If any thing else, use as your yardstick John 13:35: "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

TAKING IT HOME

1. Looking back at this week's teaching and study, is there one thing you'd especially like to remember this week?
2. Do you have any prayer requests for your group?