

This is Love, Week 3

Small Group Discussion Guide, week of March 29th

MAR 29TH SERMON SUMMARY

This is Love: Sacrifice and Joy (John 18:1-12)

Jesus was not only willing to die for us, he was eager to. He was in complete control, genuinely eager to sacrifice His life out of love for us. Because of Jesus, we can:

1. Stop Hiding and Start Receiving.

- Hiding: Feeling like we can't turn to God, draw near to God, depend on God, or be used by God because of our sins, etc
- Receiving: Believing we can do all those things (above) because of what Jesus has done for us; believing we are fully loved and forgiven.

2. Stop Earning and Start Loving

- Earning: being unsure of how God feels about us; feeling like God will love us more or less depending on our behavior, etc; leads to worry and uncertainty
- Loving: loving the way Jesus loved us, with sacrifice AND joy (Galatians 5:13)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

I. INTRODUCTION: What makes you feel loved?

(You may be familiar with “Love Languages”: words of affirmation, acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, physical touch. You can share one of these, or some other example of what makes you feel loved.)

II. THINK AND REFLECT.

Read the following words of Jesus from John 18-19:

To the soldiers and officials who arrested him:

18: 8-11 Jesus answered, “I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, then let these men go.” Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.)

Jesus commanded Peter, “Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?”

To the High Priest:

18:20 “I have spoken openly to the world,” Jesus replied. “I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. **21** Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely they know what I said.”

To the Roman governor, Pilate:

18:36-37 Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

“You are a king, then!” said Pilate.

Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

19:11 Jesus answered, “You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above. Therefore the one who handed me over to you is guilty of a greater sin.”

1. Think about these words of Jesus. How does Jesus view:

- Himself?
- His mission or purpose?
- His death?

2a. How would you describe Jesus’ attitude and mindset regarding His arrest and trials?

b. How is this surprising?

c. Why does Jesus feel this way?

3a. How does this demonstrate His love for you? (See also 1 Cor. 13:3, 2 Cor. 9:7, Heb. 12:2)

b. How does an understanding of Jesus’ love and eagerness to sacrifice for you, help you to:

- *Stop Hiding and Start Receiving?*
- *Stop Earning and Start Loving?*

4a. Why did Peter attempt to cut off the servant's ear (Jn. 18:10)?

b. How are we like Peter in his response to unwanted, unexpected events?

c. How can we be less like Peter?

III. PERSONAL APPLICATION (Choose 1 of the following if time is limited)

5. How has God been speaking to you through the message and discussion with your group?

6. The two application points from Sunday's message are:

- *Stop Hiding and Start Receiving*
- *Stop Earning and Start Loving*

a. Does one seem more applicable to you, and why?

b. How do they challenge you?

c. How do they encourage you, and/or help you to feel loved or affirmed?

7. Our focus for the last several weeks has been on grace and love. How have you been *experiencing grace and growing in love* recently?