

## Growth Group Homework

For the week of December 1, 2013

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Because this is the last meeting of the fall quarter, the homework is shorter than normal. As usual, your final meeting will include a look back on how God has worked this past quarter, along with completing Feedback Forms. Our winter Growth Group quarter will begin the week of January 12, 2014. Have a great few weeks off celebrating the birth of our Lord! Merry Christmas!

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### MY STORY

Looking back at past Christmas seasons, what are some of your favorite parts of this time of the year?

- Getting the house or apartment looking like Christmas
- Presents for friends and family
- Christmas Eve or Christmas morning
- Holiday food (if so, what's your favorite?)
- Time off
- Getting together with friends and family
- Getting back to normal when it's all over
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

As you look back on this quarter, what are one or two things about your Growth Group experience that you have appreciated most? (It can be time spent together, how your group has encouraged you to continue to live your life for Christ, a service project, spiritual breakthrough, growth challenge or anything else.)

### DIGGING DEEPER

1. This week, Mike challenged us to evaluate how we show love to others by replacing the word "love" with our own name in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. This description of love is not only representative of how to show love to others, but also how God shows his love toward us.

Looking back at this list of love, which 2 or 3 characteristics of love are you particularly thankful for in your own life?

2. How can the following verses help us further understand what it means to choose to love others?

Romans 12:9-10

1 John 3:18

Ephesians 4:32

Looking back at your responses to the questions above, are there any actions of love you want to make sure you put into action during this holiday season?

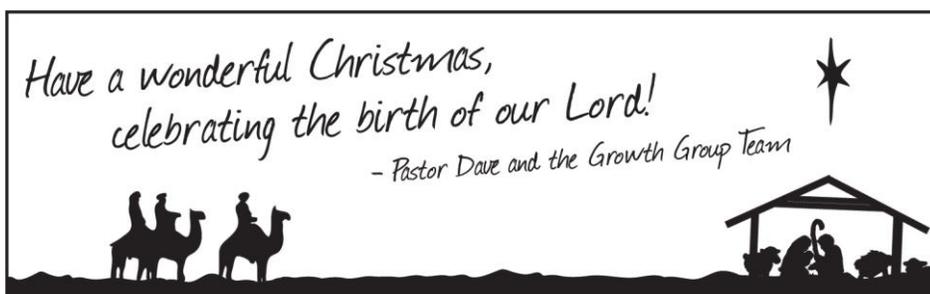
### **THE REASON FOR THE SEASON**

As followers of Christ, we are able to celebrate the Christmas season because of that incredible “one thing” God has given us – the gift of his son, Jesus, born so that we might have life through his death and resurrection! Could there be any greater gift? Your time together this week will conclude by taking Communion and remembering this great gift God has given us through his son Jesus.

To prepare for Communion, read Luke 2:1-7; 22:19-20 & John 15:12-17. What catches your attention as beneficial to remember as you take Communion in your group?

### ***YOU’VE MADE A DIFFERENCE!***

Thanks for all you have done to make a difference in our community this past year. In 2013, our Growth Groups and ministries have completed nearly 500 service projects that have shown God’s love and met real needs in North County. (That’s in addition to the Weekend of Service!) Your compassion is making a difference!



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### **DIGGING DEEPER**

1. This week, Mike challenged us to evaluate how we show love to others by replacing the word "love" with our own name in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

**1 Corinthians 13:4-7**

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. [NIV]

This description of love is not only representative of how to show love to others, but also how God shows his love toward us.

Looking back at this list of love, which 2 or 3 characteristics of love are you particularly thankful for in your own life?

2. How can the following verses help us further understand what it means to choose to love others?

**Romans 12:9-10**

Love in Action

9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. [NIV]

**1 John 3:18**

18 Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. [NIV]

**Ephesians 4:32**

32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. [NIV]

Looking back at your responses to the questions above, are there any actions of love you want to make sure you put into action during this holiday season?

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### **Luke 2:1-7**

#### The Birth of Jesus

1 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. 2 (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 And everyone went to their own town to register.

4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. [NIV]

### **Luke 22:19-20**

19 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

20 In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. [NIV]

### **John 15:12-17**

12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. 17 This is my command: Love each other. [NIV]

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