
Imitating Love

Who We've Become

Romans 8:15-16

What God's Love Looks Like

1 John 4:19/ John 3:16/ John13:34-35

- (1) Love takes the **FIRST STEP**
- (2) Love is **UNCONDITIONAL**
- (3) Love is **INCLUSIVE**
- (4) Love **MOTIVATES**

Imitating God's Love...

Ephesians 5:1(MSG)/ Isaiah 55:8-11

- (1) Takes **ACTION** - it's not a thought to **PONDER**
- (2) Takes **TIME** and **PATIENCE**
- (3) Takes **COMMITMENT**

God's Love Language

1John 5:3/ Matthew 22:36-40

- ✓ Imitating God's **LOVE** shows our **LOVE** for him

Growth Group Homework

For the week of May 3, 2015

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. Jeff mentioned that behavior is most often caught rather than taught. Can you think of any principles about love, positive or negative, you caught from your family or close friends growing up that have influenced how you love others today?

2. If someone were to point to a child and say, "that child is really loved by his parents," what would you conclude about how his parents treat him?

In what ways could your answer be the same with how God treats us as his dearly loved children?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. We heard this weekend that followers of Jesus are dearly loved children. Just like in our earthly family, being a child of God comes with a host of benefits and responsibilities. What encourages you or challenges you in the following passages about the benefits and responsibilities of being a child of God?

1 John 3:1-3

¹ See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³ All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. [NIV]

Hebrews 12:7-12

⁷ Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? ⁸ If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. ⁹ Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! ¹⁰ They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹ No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

¹² Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees. [NIV]

Galatians 4:4-7

⁴ But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. ⁶ Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “*Abba, Father.*” ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir. [NIV]

2. Jeff mentioned that our example of how to love is Jesus. His love for others is reflected in his willingness to be interrupted by needy people as he traveled about. What do you notice about how he handled those interruptions from the following passages?

Mark 10:46-52

Blind Bartimaeus Receives His Sight

⁴⁶ Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of Timaeus”), was sitting by the roadside begging. ⁴⁷ When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁸ Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!”

⁴⁹ Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.”

So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.”⁵⁰ Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus.

⁵¹ “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him.

The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.”

⁵² “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road. [NIV]

Luke 19:1-10

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

¹ Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. ² A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. ³ He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. ⁴ So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

⁵ When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” ⁶ So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

⁷ All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

⁸ But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

⁹ Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” [NIV]

It's easy to think interruptions mostly involve physical needs but they can actually take a variety of forms. What kinds of interruptions besides physical needs might you encounter in your world?

What can distract you from noticing the needs that motivate the interruptions?

Can you think of any reasons why it would be okay to ignore an interruption rather than respond to it?

3. Being told that we need to imitate Jesus can often feel like we're being asked to do something that seems impossible. We wonder, "How can we expect to be able to act like the sinless Savior of the world?" What insights and encouragement do the following passages provide for why imitating Jesus is not impossible nor is it something we have to accomplish by sheer determination alone?

John 15:1-8

The Vine and the Branches

¹ "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. [NIV]

Acts 1:8

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." [NIV]

John 16:7

⁷ But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. [NIV]

Can you think of anything specific that you can do to help you experience more of God's power to love and live like Jesus?

TAKING IT HOME

1. Is there anything from this week's sermon or study that you need to remember or apply?

2. Is there someone you're struggling to love and you'd like prayer for that situation?

Prayer Requests:

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WEEKEND OF SERVICE STORIES: Have a story from Weekend of Service? Share it with us by emailing news@northcoastchurch.com or calling the church office and leaving a voicemail at (760) 724-7074 x129.



COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES: Served once and can't get enough? We've got year-round opportunities for individuals and/ or your Growth Group to keep the serving spirit alive!

Bread of Life – Prepare & serve a meal for Oceanside's homeless.

Fraternity House (House for those with HIV/Aids) – prepare & serve a dinner; visit for the evening.

See more service options and register at: NorthCoastCommunityService.org or call (760) 724-6700 x234.