

Series - Revamp

Date/s - 15 October 2017

Topic - Love Looks Like Jesus

Speaker/s - Pastor John Koe

Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

Worship [15 min]

You may select songs like “God Be Praised”, “King Of My Heart”, “Reward”, “My Greatest Love Is You” or “Stay Amazed”

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will:

1. Understand the mission of the church and cell is to fulfill the kingdom mandate, which is love; and
2. Commit to show God's love to the people around us.

Word [45 min]

Pastor John started by sharing that many modern churches have lost sight of our original purpose. Most have become a social club, to entertain the saints, instead of fulfilling the kingdom mandate to preach the Good News. The reason why modern churches have little impact on society, is because we have failed to show God's love to the people around. John 13:34-35 makes this clear- *“A new command I give you: Love one another. **As I have loved you**, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”* We cannot truly love the world, before we learn to love those in the brethren. Pastor John also shared that Jesus has set the measure of love we are to show one another, which is His love for us. This is a commandment, not a suggestion.

Pastor John next shared ways that Jesus loved His disciples. By taking reference from these ways, we will know how we should likewise love one another. As gleaned from various scriptures, Jesus often washed the feet of His disciples (John 13: 4-5), taking on the job of the most lowly servants in the day. In similar fashion, Jesus wants us to humble ourselves and do practical, tangible and simple acts of service. Pastor John explained that even small acts of love reveal the love of Christ. We are also to practice agape love (“love one another”), to seek the highest good of the other. This is an intentional commitment, whether or not we feel like loving. Our Lord Jesus fleshed out this aspect of love, by reaching out to His betrayer, Judas, showing sacrificial love even to death.

Pastor John then taught that Jesus is Love personified. He didn't just command love, but He is love. Pastor John expounded on Matthew 26:36-55, an account from the night Jesus was crucified. Love looks like caring for His disciples sleeping, in His most anguished hour. Even when His disciples (we) were unfaithful, Jesus is always faithful to God's call to the cross. Love looks like healing the soldier's ear when He was about to be caught. Love looks like Jesus praying on the cross for those who tortured and crucified Him. Love looks like Jesus. When we love, people see Jesus. Every act radical and genuine act of love reveals Christ, in a loveless world.

Pastor John concluded with the exhortation for us to love with TRUTH and ACTION, not just words only (1 John 3:16-18). All it takes is intentionality. How then can we love like Jesus love? Only by the power of the Holy Spirit, can we be empowered to love like Jesus (1 John 4:16).

May we be willing vessels for Him to express His Love through us!

Discussion Questions

1. **Pastor John shared his observation that the calling of the church is to reveal the divine love of God to the world- we capture the attention of the world, by displaying God's love in our lives. Unfortunately, many of us have forgotten the reason behind our coming together to fellowship weekly. We have mostly fallen short in loving people, and gotten slack in our mission. There is an urgent task at hand to be restored back to our original mandate of revealing Christ- starting first within the church, then to the world.**

Has your cell been more a social club, instead of an embassy of the Kingdom? What are some barriers which held/ hold you back from actively showing love to the brethren and/or pre-believers? [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *This is a recap and ice-breaking question for cell members to share common reasons preventing them from pursuing the mandate of showing love to others and fulfilling the great commission. Some examples could be a lack of revelation of God's love for us, a pre-occupation with our life's seasons, fear of man, fear of inconvenience, lack of the urgency concerning the great commission, etc.*

If time permits, have the cell read Luke 15:4,5,7, which shows God's heart for the lost: "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing...likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repent, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." The Wikipedia, on the other hand, defines a social club like this: "a social club may be a group of people or the place where they meet, generally formed around a common interest, occupation or activity. We are to take heed that 'the church is not a museum for saints but a hospital for sinners" (Morton Kelsey).

2. **Pastor John next shared about the kind of love that Jesus wants us to show in our lives - we are to love each other, like He first loved us. First, our love is to consist of humble, practical and tangible acts of service. Second, our love is to be sacrificial and of an agape nature, intentionally seeking the good of others.**

What are some wrong mindsets you may have about love, that run counter to these two aspects of love shared above? [10 min]

Leader's Notes: *A relate question. This question allows members to identify and share deeper about some common misconceptions, pre-conceived notions or false cues taken from society about the kind of love. For example, the wrong mindset that acts of love have to be grandiose and noble, may cause members to over-spiritualize and under-estimate the importance daily acts of kindness. The misconception that love is synonymous with tolerating sins, and to love is to endorse, may cause them to love in a manner that does not bring ultimate good to others. Yet another is that love is simply a feeling or emotion, not something you have to make an intentional and selfless commitment to do, seeking the good of others, even at the expense of your time and comfort.*

3. **Read the account of Jesus in Matthew 26:36-55. It reflects how Jesus consistently embodied love, even through the entire harrowing night before His crucifixion, even to His closest disciples who failed Him and deserted Him, and the soldiers who caught Him and crucified Him.**

Take some time to reflect on the attitudes of our hearts and our love for others (especially the “un-lovables”). Are we able to love like Jesus loves - not just to those who loves us back in return, but for those who betray us or wrong us? [10 min]

Leader's Notes: A reflect question. Have members explore their daily posture of their hearts, and assess their love for others in light of this account. This question allows members to understand the nature of true and unconditional love as displayed by Jesus. This is the counter-culture love we are called to display, and the only kind of love which will reveal Jesus. “If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matthew 5:46-48). Also refer to 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 on Paul’s description on the attributes of love. These can serve as helpful Biblical anchors on what love should be.

4. **Pastor John concluded with a personal testimony of how a small act of kindness extended to a stranger, can display God’s love and change the trajectory of a person’s life. We should not underestimate small acts of radical and genuine love. All we need is to be intentional, and to be willing to yield to His calling.**

What are some ways you can commit to show practical love? Who are the people around us who need our love? List out some practical steps. [10 min]

Leader's Notes: This is a response question. Have members brainstorm concrete ways they show little acts of love, in their schools and workplaces and homes, and to which they can commit to.

Leaders may get members to break into small groups to share more and if time permits and to pray for one another for specific action steps that they can commit to.

Work [10 min]

Let’s pray:

1. We will commit to show practical love to the people around us & imitating the radical obedience of our Lord Jesus.

Announcement

1. M2M Symposium
Men, His Choice, His Spirituality & His Family
25 Nov 2017, RiverLife Worship Centre
Register at <https://tinyurl.com/yboo8g9j>
All are welcome (dinner will be provided)