

life groups

NLC Life Group Through the Bible Study

Week of September 10, 2017

Sermon: Real Love in an Angry World
—The Heart of the Father



Life Group Schedule

15 MIN Eat, Meet & Greet

15 MIN Ice Breaker Game: **Fishbowl**. A fun-filled word and memory game! Separate the group into two teams. Give each person three pieces of paper and a pen or pencil, instructing them to write any word or short familiar phrase on each piece, fold it in half, and put their papers into a fish bowl, basket, or other container. The play occurs in 1-3 rounds, depending on how much time you want to take:

Round 1—Taboo. The first team selects a person to go first, grabbing a piece of paper from the container and using only words and sentences as hints. They have one minute to do so. They cannot use motions, “Sounds like . . .,” or spelling hints. If the person guessed the word, they continue with another slip of paper, with their team guessing as many words as they can within the one-minute time limit. If the team is unable to guess correctly, the person can pass and pull another slip of paper. However, a person can only pass once during his or her one minute. The second team then takes a turn, seeing how many words or phrases they can guess. If you run out of slips of paper, put them all back into the container for Round 2.

Round 2—Password. Played in the same manner as the first round, in this round, the hint can only be one word. After both teams take turns, put all the words back into the container for the third round.

Round 3—Charades. Again, the same sequence is played as in rounds one and two, however, this time, each person needs to act and use motions as hints for their team’s guesses. When all the words run out, tally all the points. The team with the most points wins the game.

NOTE: It is less important to get through all of the study material as it is to engage in meaningful conversations, strengthen each other in relationships, and pray for each other’s needs.

OPENING PRAYER

45–60 MIN *Real Love in an Angry World—The Heart of the Father*

- We get angry over big and little things.

Q1. What kinds of things did you notice this week that made others angry or frustrated?

Q2. What kinds of things made you angry or frustrated this week? Why?

- This world needs God’s love, and we’re the delivery vehicle for it.

TAKE TURNS READING I CORINTHIANS 12:27 (THE BODY OF CHRIST), MATTHEW 5:13-16 (SALT AND LIGHT), & MATTHEW 12:30-31 (LOVE GOD & LOVE OTHERS)

- Q3.** What does God's love look like?
- Q4.** Where have you seen God's love demonstrated in your own life?
- Q5.** How can you be—or become—a conduit for demonstrating God's love in your sphere of influence?
- Q6.** Using the following verses, discuss different ways that Jesus demonstrated love to those around him:
- › Matthew 8:3
 - › Luke 5:27-32
 - › John 4:4-26
- Q7.** In this last passage, what was the end result?

1. God's love is Counter-Cultural
 - a. One reason the world doesn't know what real love looks like is because the church has viewed the world as the enemy! But unbelievers are not our enemy—the devil is our enemy.
 - › He loves to steal, kill & destroy
 - › He divides, and he marginalizes
 - Jesus crosses that line all through scripture, as should we. We're called to reach the unbelievers with God's love.
2. God's love is Selfless

HAVE SOMEONE READ EPHESIANS 5:25-27

 - God takes the single greatest act of love the world has ever seen --- and makes it the standard for EVERY CHRISTIAN HOME: Love others as Christ loved.
 - According to this passage, how did Jesus demonstrate real love?
3. God's love is Relational
 - The best way to experience God's love is in relationship with others.
 - This has been the model since the beginning—it's what the Bible calls **Covenant**:
 - Covenant is a fancy name for an agreement, like these:
 - › Noah: God promised never to flood the earth again.
 - › Abraham: God covenanted with Abraham, "You will be my people."

- › Moses: God delivered the Israelites from slavery to the Promised Land.

READ GEN. 26:28-29

- Abimelech and Isaac were in disagreement, but Abimelech saw God's hand on Isaac's life, so he makes a covenant with him.
 - › I'm never gonna hurt you --- I'm only going to bless you!
 - › That's the kind of covenant we make within the Body of Christ: We won't hurt you, steal your money, blab your secrets, talk bad about you, or be mean to your kids! It's a covenant of love.
 - › This covenant goes further in blessing each other and others, doing whatever we can to encourage, strengthen, and lead others into God's very best for their lives.
- The world craves this kind of love. If the church doesn't give it away, Satan will offer up dozens of cheap imitations!
- The **New Covenant** of the New Testament was different.

READ JOHN 3:16 AND MARK 10:45

Q8. How do these two verses affect how you go through your daily life?

READ JOHN 21:12

Q9. According to this verse, how did Jesus model covenant relationship after his resurrection?

Q10. How have you personally experienced fellowship and love from the Body of Christ when you were in a time of crisis?

- God's plan of loving others is always through **relationship**.
- There are millions in our world who are hanging by a thread, who are scared, lonely, lost, abandoned, abused, and forgotten. Many who have made mistakes, failed, or experienced a tragedy.
- They're looking for the same love that you have inside of you, the love of God that needs to be shared.

Q11. Who is in crisis around you who needs to experience the fellowship and love that you have? Is there something you have noticed that your small group can actively participate in together to demonstrate love to another person, family, or community?

TAKE PRAYER REQUESTS & PRAY OVER NEEDS

ANNOUNCEMENTS