

LIFE GROUP LESSON

Now more than Ever - Week of August 31

Now more than ever, the world needs followers of Jesus to be *like Jesus* – missional and generous. This message series has reminded us what Christ Church values. Using the acronym C-H-R-I-S-T –

C – *Children matter to Jesus so we will provide with excellence ministry with children and students so they might know Christ and become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.*

H – *Healing happens best in need-based ministries and Life Groups.*

R – *Reaching unchurched persons is a core value because lost people matter to God.*

I – *Inspirational and incarnational worship is at the heart of who we are as we seek to connect people to God.*

Next week we will look at **S** – *Small Groups are the best place for Life Change*, because September 7th will be the launch to our Fall Life Group season in which our goal is 100 Life Groups across each campus. So today, we look at the sixth core value, last letter of the acronym:

T – *Training our worshipers to be outward focused by planting a new church every three years and giving away 25% of our resources.*

In the message outline one of our campus pastors on the Teaching Team shared how several years ago, he heard a pastor friend say something he will never forget. It was when their children were playing together. The campus pastor's daughter who was young at the time was playing with some toys that belonged to the son of his pastor friend. As the young boy started to become territorial with his toys, his dad quickly and wisely corrected the boy: "Remember son, our friends are more important than our toys!"

Though we tell our kids to share, our lifestyles often contradict our words. We are surrounded by a culture that constantly tells us to be about hoarding up wealth and storing up treasure for me and all that is mine. Yet, followers of Christ are reminded of Jesus' words: "There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). Jesus calls us to be generous to the point of laying down our lives for another. We hear the words of John the Baptist: "No one can receive anything unless God gives it from heaven" (John 3:27). All we have been blessed with has been given so we may bless others.

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Discussion:

- In these verses, what does the apostle Paul say about sowing and harvesting?
- "You must each decide in your heart how much to give ... God loves a person who gives cheerfully" (see v7). How does giving and generosity reflect the heart of God?

How does living sacrificially emulate the Lord Jesus?

- God calls us to live generously (Psalm 37:25-26, 41:1-2). If you are struggling in being generous, or perhaps find yourself fostering a mindset of scarcity over abundance, what do you think is keeping you from enjoying life as a child of God?

The Law is like a mirror. Much how a mirror informs us 'what needs to be fixed' but is powerless to fix anything itself, the Law shows us what is wrong in our lives but is powerless to fix our lives. In fact, the only power the Law has is to condemn us – for we have all sinned – and sin gives it that power. Yet, the Law is holy. See Romans 7:7-13.

Jesus came to do what the Law could not do ... Save us! For Jesus came not to do away with the Law, but to fulfill it –

"Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God's laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 5:17-19).

Discussion:

- What are the two greatest commandments, according to Jesus in Mark 12:29-31?
- How does the core value of **T** – *Training our worshipers to be outward-focused by planting a new church every 3 years and giving away 25% of our resources* – reflect these two great commandments?

Loving God and loving others sounds simple, even doable, yet often the very people who become upset and jealous as we choose to love God and love others missionally and generously is not unchurched people but 'churched' folk – that is, individuals operating under a false spirit of religion.

Now more than ever a lost world needs the radical message of forgiveness, not condemnation. Forgiveness of sin is available through repentance, a gift freely given by God through our Lord Jesus. We must be about proclaiming the whole truth. Though the Law cannot fix us, Jesus can! And he offers salvation to all.

Discussion:

- **Read Acts 13:38-52.** Where do you see yourself in this story/account?
- Notice in v 43 Paul and Barnabas urged new believers 'to continue to rely on the grace of God' not on them. Why must we rely on God rather than a personality?

There may be times we must ‘shake the dust from our feet’ and move on (v51). Still we must pray God’s mercy over all people, including ourselves, so we don’t fall away. Close by reading together Paul’s words to Timothy –

“I urge you first of all to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. This is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus. He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone. This is the message God gave to the world at just the right time” (1 Timothy 2:1-6).

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Text: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, Acts 13:38-49



PLAIN TRUTH

**Generosity enables Christians to fight _____
and expand God’s _____.**

Life Application Principles of Sowing for Mission:

1. Sow _____ we reap _____, while sowing generously we reap _____.
2. Sow _____ we reflect our faith in a _____ God, sow generously we reflect a God of _____.
3. Sowing generously enables us to fight _____—the feeling of not having _____. (Psalm 23:1)
4. Sowing seeds of faith by _____ of _____ produces a _____ of new _____ for Christ.

One Year Bible Reading For This Week:

August 31: Job 37:1-39:30, 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:10, Psalm 44:9-26, Proverbs 22:13
September 1: Job 40:1-42:17, 2 Corinthians 5:11-21, Psalm 45:1-17, Proverbs 22:14
September 2: Ecclesiastes 1:1-3:22, 2 Corinthians 6:1-13, Psalm 46:1-11, Proverbs 22:15
September 3: Ecclesiastes 4:1-6:12, 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:7, Psalm 47:1-9, Proverbs 22:16
September 4: Ecclesiastes 7:1-9:18, 2 Corinthians 7:8-16, Psalm 48:1-14, Prov. 22:17-19
September 5: Ecclesiastes 10:1-12:14, 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, Ps. 49:1-20, Prov. 22:20-21
September 6: Song of Solomon 1:1-4:16, 2 Cor. 8:16-24, Ps. 50:1-23, Prov. 22:22-23

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