

Week 4 Monday Brainstorm Session Notes – March 9, 2009

Week 3 RECAP:

Small Groups observation: no one could remember receiving grace or giving grace. Is there something here?

When you extend grace you will be misunderstood. We intentionally hurt God when we premeditatively sin and expect grace afterwards. Our personal enemies have just done the same.

Red Balloon as a representation of your heart. What is attached to your heart? Stated what God wants is your whole heart. He needs all the stuff attached to it in order to get to your heart. Tie balloon to a variety of “attachments” representing career, car, stuff. God wants your heart.

Rich young ruler said “no”, Peter said “yes” to “selling all” to follow Jesus. Example of surrendering heart continually.

Crossroads used what flags to illustrate daily surrendering. Revolutionaries take up weapons of revolution. In our “Jesus” revolution, our weapon is “our cross”. When we try to add the cross on to our lives - (had 5 books - representing learning as weapons – in arms and picked up a large cross as well, awkward, cumbersome, versus putting everything down to pick up my cross. Illustrate this physically.)

Week 4:

Adoption Certificate – see www.thejourneypartners.com for more info.

Song called “orphans of God” – there are no strangers, no outcasts.

How to illustrate God’s love in a new way? How can I keep on sinning? When children say, “you do not love me?” Not right after graeter’s, but right after they have done something wrong.

Love connected to “no pain” for me? Not discipling me = love? Love limited by human love, by parents focus on performance.

Adoption:

- Go great distance to adopt.
- Humbly be interviewed, examined, judged.
- Costs much.
- Produce parenting plan that needs to be approved by social worker.
- Challenge to intentionally love when not biological, not grown up in family.

In first century bringing an adopted child into family gave the adopted child more privileges, usurped the eldest child’s rights.

Adoption gives “life that they deserve/need”, adoption allows “new, richer life” from life that would be bleaker otherwise.

What about those adopted in community hearing this? What will they feel?

Pharisees angry because Jesus adopting the wrong people, people already rejected, and invited them as adopted to feasts.

God loves you right where you are, but will not leave you there.

What if we create angst that can be processed in small groups? Ask questions? Why do we believe God’s love is silly or a cliché or without boundaries? We have expectations in all our relationships.

What is God’s benefit to receiving our love?

Video “The Way I am” by Ingrid Michelson – clown suits – is there a value for us remembering that God delights in our receiving him?

I know God loves me, but does he like me?

Brendan Manning story about friend who threw himself on a grenade and died to protect him, save him. Brendan asks, "Did he love me?" Of course, he gave his life for me. Brendan took his name (was Richard Brennan, friend was Ray Manning).

Movie "Armageddon" (Bruce Willis) father chooses to die because the man who was chosen to die loved his daughter. We believe we need to clean ourselves up to receive.

"God loves us" became a cliché because it became an empty proclaimed slogan, an advertising line, a disconnected statement".

God did go first, through Jesus.

When was the last time the church was accused of "absurd love"? If your child or wife said, "your love is absurd!" What would that be like? How do we capture the picture of "absurd love"? Show beating of Jesus in "Passion of Christ" movie and ask all in the auditorium to love the guard who is beating him.

Absurd Love: How do we make it more relevant, more recent, more real?

Like predator who kills 13 year old this week. Love him. Like God does. Needs to be blatant.

An adoption story could be cast as Absurd Love.

Henri Nouwen "Flying Rodleigh's" acrobats "clowning in Rome" book also video clip?
The twirling trapeze artist says, "I can't try to be caught. I just need to let the catcher catch me".

Movie "To End All Wars" scene: bible study leader loving soldiers, leader sacrifices life, to love their captures.

But, we are trying to encourage people in receiving **God's absurd love**, and not loving others.

When is the moment we, ourselves, personally experienced God's love. When are other moments to illustrate receiving AND remaining?

Use page 64 in Guide, the vine illustration (parable) to challenge all to respond to God's love by ABIDING.

Adoption (Ephesians 1-5) "gives God great pleasure to adopt us." Jesus loves you as dirty, as spoiled, as broken as you are now.