



November 1st, 2015

Turning To God's Self-Giving

1. Reject the FALSE NARRATIVE:

RELIGION: WE WORK OUR WAY UP TO GOD

2. Embrace the JESUS NARRATIVE:

RECONCILIATION: GOD WORKS HIS WAY DOWN TO US

For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹ More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. - Romans 5:10-11 (ESV)

All this [new creation] is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. - 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 (ESV)

A Love That Dies To Win

1. LOVE, TO BE REAL, TAKES RISKS

He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. ¹¹ He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. - John 1:10-11 (NLT)

Colossians 1:15-17

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones God's messengers! How often I have wanted to gather your children together as a hen protects her chicks beneath her wings, but you wouldn't let me - Matthew 23:37 (NLT)

2. LOVE, TO BE GREAT, IS SACRIFICIAL

There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friend - John 15:13 (NLT)

Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵ or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. - 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 (NLT)

My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness. - 2 Corinthians 12:9 (NLT)

3. LOVE, TO BE EFFECTIVE, IS SUBSTITUTIONARY

For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ. - 1 Corinthians 5:21 (NLT)

Romans 8:3-4: Galatians 3:13

Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the Spirit. - 1 Peter 3:18 (NLT)

The Last Supper, A New Passover

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–25; MATTHEW 26:26–28; MARK 14:22–24; LUKE 22:17–19

- **THE PASSOVER LAMB:** THE CENTRALITY OF HIS DEATH

Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed for us. - 1 Corinthians 5:7 (NLT)

- **THE PASSOVER REPLACEMENT:** THE PURPOSE OF HIS DEATH

It was by faith that Moses commanded the people of Israel to keep the Passover and to sprinkle blood on the doorposts so that the angel of death would not kill their firstborn sons. – Hebrews 11:28 (NLT) (see also, Exodus 11:4-5; 12:12-13, 23; 13:1ff)

- **THE PASSOVER MEAL:** THE NEED TO RECEIVE IT PERSONALLY

When we bless the cup at the Lord's Table, aren't we sharing in the blood of Christ? And when we break the bread, aren't we sharing in the body of Christ? - 1 Corinthians 10:16 (see also, John 6:53-55)

I Will Turn To God by...

- Memorizing **1 Corinthians 5:21**
- Accepting his friendship-driven heart for my heart.
- Embracing his risk-taking and sacrificial love for me and others.
- Surrendering my life, for the first time, to Christ as my Savior.

WALK THE TALK A Growth Group Guide

1. Have you ever wrestled with why or how Jesus had to die for us? Explain if you have.
2. Have you ever felt unrequited love? Can you imagine God allowing himself to experience this pain?
3. How can self-sacrifice be a sign of strength, not weakness? How is it the highest act of all?
4. When we talk about the power of God, we often think about his mighty acts more than his incarnation and crucifixion. Why do you think we do this?
5. Have you ever struggled to really know that God loves you? What could help you to find a clearer answer to that struggle?
6. Describe when someone made a sacrifice for your well-being. Think of a time when you sacrificed for someone else. How did you feel? Could this be a sign that you are “made in God’s image”?

SOUL TRAINING – READING JOHN’S GOSPEL

A Personal Transformation Exercise

The Principle:

When was the last time you read through an entire book of the Bible? Usually we read through small portions or a short devotion based on a single verse or principle. By reading a book in its entirety, we get to experience the whole story. New themes, ideas, images, and stories stand out to us when we ingest the story as a whole.

Why read the Gospel of John? This is a very unique Gospel. It begins with a prologue that tells us about the *Logos*, the Word or the Son of God, who was “made flesh, and dwelt among us.” John gives us a glimpse into Jesus with a series of unique stories, but most importantly, John’s Gospel clearly depicts Jesus’ relationship with His Father.

The Plan:

The plan this week (if you haven’t already figured it out) is to read the Gospel of John in its entirety. If you can’t sit down and read through it all in one sitting, perhaps consider breaking it into sections. Breaking it down into four sections will give you five to seven chapters to read in one sitting. The goal here is for you to simply read the entire Gospel without any sort of notes, study material, devotional thoughts, etc. These types of materials are great, but it is a good practice to occasionally read through the Bible without any sort of external input. By doing this, you are allowing the Word to speak to you as it is written.

If you should have any pressing questions or thoughts that arise during the reading, you might want to write them down and search for answers at another time. For now, just read the Gospel of John as if you were reading a story with a beginning, middle, and end.