

## **Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.**

**Sunday February 24, 2019. "More Love: Reclaiming your heart".**

### **A. Intro.**

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work thru from the message this past Sunday. Whether you were able to attend the worship service or not, this devotional is free-standing and you can still use it to help you dig deeper in your own spiritual walk.

Take as long as you need to dive into this material and feel free to share it.

### **B. Recap.**

We're in our fourth and final week of our **"More Love"** series, looking at what it means to actually practice love the way scriptures teach it. The first week we said, this kind of love HAS TO begin with us. There are things that build up within us that inhibit, actually block our ability to love well. So we have to do a regular inventory to root out those things within us that would keep us from loving more. The second week, we saw the beauty of love expressed fully in a richly diverse community, in *"The Harmony of Love"*. We saw and experienced the power of everyone joining in and creating something larger than just what we can do on our own. And then the third Sunday, Tami talked about the difficulties of love in *"Love Gone Bad"*. Tami began with this understanding of love. Love is complex. It's multidimensional, multifaceted. But it can be summed up by realizing we are called to "BE" love and that love must be "others-focused".

One brief review question.

**What do you personally find the greatest challenge in being able to "Love More"?**

### **C. Sunday.**

On Sunday Kal pulled back the curtain and gave us a personal and vulnerable front row seat to the story of hurt in his life. Telling the story of how he ended up at NCC, he stressed in order to be able to love well, to love more, means we have to work to *"Reclaim our Heart"* from hurt. Bitterness is poison, and allowing it to grow within us, shuts down our ability to love well. This is an incredibly difficult truth of life. And requires such a mature and intentional response from us to keep from getting sucked into the hole of bitterness.

So...let's skim the surface of this topic of recovering from hurt.

**How have you experienced hurt or watched someone else handle hurt?**

**Did you see or experience bitterness, or the threat of it, in that hurt?**

**What was your response?**

### **D. Scripture.**

Only one short passage was used Sunday, but it drove home the danger of letting bitterness take root. The passage was **Hebrews 12:14-17**. Read this passage and then we'll unpack it a bit.

Let's get all agricultural here. Talk about weeds.

**What can you say about weeds, and how they grow?**

**What parallels can you draw from weeds about how bitterness grows?**

**E. Specific suggestions to reclaim your heart after hurt.**

Five suggestions were made, in a process way, to help survive and rebuild to reclaim your heart. Spend some time on each of these steps, and think about how you can go thru each process in the most healthy and productive way possible.

**How to survive and reclaiming your heart.**

**1. Curl up in a ball. (Feel the ‘feels’).**

This means we have to acknowledge our pain, and enter fully into the hurt. The Psalms are full of this, and psychologists will tell us the importance of purging feelings that come from a traumatic hurt.

**2. Find support.**

While we’re reeling and feeling all the ‘feels’, we need to gather some people around us who are fully for us. At first, we don’t need explainers, people who can figure things out what went wrong, but just close friends who are just on our side.

**3. Find your solid footing.**

**Where does the ground not shake?**

**Where was the last place you had solid footing?**

In order to have the foundation to begin to rebuild, we have to find our emotional solid ground. These don’t have to be spiritual things, but only what we find to be still trustworthy in our life.

**What do you have control over and don’t?**

**Where can you gain some control?**

**4. What do you know for sure? (God).**

This is actually the first step of rebuilding. This step is naming those things we believed before, but will require some reframing in our understanding of them. Here is what you talk and know about God, but will have to cast off the more childish ideas and replace them with a more mature and experienced understanding of who God is. Now we’re beginning to build a permanent structure.

**5. Begin to refill.**

Once we’ve worked some on the process of cleaning out, and establishing some foundation, we need to put good back in. This is crafting an intentional life of healthy content that feeds us spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and socially.

**You are writing the story of your life.** And since no one can escape being hurt, having something traumatic happen, we have to decide how we will write that specific story of our life. The saddest things is to see someone stuck long term in their hurt.

We have to **choose to fight our way out of hurt and not let bitterness take root.** It is possible, and **we will like who we become when we can do that well.** And it will help us to love others more.