

Sermon Notes:

Love Grows in the Crucible of Suffering

Romans 12:9-21, week 3

Kids, draw a picture of an enemy being fed with “heaps of burning coals on his head” (Rom 12:20)

Write your name here: _____



Helping People Follow Jesus

Our Core Values:

Graciousness. Following Jesus is a journey in humility and grace. We want to humbly depend upon God’s grace and humbly extend God’s grace to others.

Togetherness. Following Jesus is not a solo journey. By following Jesus together, our differences help us follow him better.

Engagement. Following Jesus is a journey of prayerful, intentional community engagement. What matters most is people following Jesus and people learn to follow Jesus through relationships.

Reproducing. Following Jesus is a journey of reproducing gospel communities. We want to see this reproduction happen at every level – from life groups to starting other churches.

Twenty-sixth Sunday After Pentecost, November 13, 2016

Welcome to our church. If you have children, please pick up a writing board for them and a bulletin so they can draw during the message (there’s an idea on the back of the bulletin for their participation). Our service will be about an hour long. We value being together, so our children stay with us during the service.

If you need to leave the main room with a child, you are welcome to go to the east room for some privacy.

We don’t “pass the plate” here at LEFC. If you want to give towards the ministry of this church, there is an offering box on the welcome table.

Pastor Tom Starkjohn. Contact info: Cell # 402.297.0672.

Do you get the LEFC Weekly email? This is for regular attenders and it’s the way to keep up with our church. Send an email to Pastor Tom at tomstarkjohn@gmail.com and say “sign me up for that email”.

Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.

(Psalm 95:6-7 ESV)

- **Before the worship service: Please join us at 8:45 in the east room for 15 min of prayer for our church.**
- **Sing a song of praise to God: *O Worship the King*, Hymn # 21**
- **Historical Confession of Faith—EFCA Statement #1—God**
We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.
- **A Song reminding us of the Gospel: *And Can It Be*, Hymn #248**
- **A story of a life changed by the Gospel**
- **A song helping us memorize Scripture**
- **The teaching of the Word—Romans 12:9-21, week 3**
- **A Closing Song: *Blessed Be the Tie That Binds*, Hymn #207**

Because we have all our musical words printed in our hymn books this week, we have a combined bulletin and Life-Group notes this week. Each week at our Life Groups we practice four Life-giving practices, each of which are briefly listed here.

Life-giving Prayer (about 10 min)

1. Do you have any stories to share this week about worshiping God in the everyday stuff of life?
2. Try using the simple sentences below, filling in the blank. You could spend a bit of time on “glory”, people completing the sample sentence as many times as they want. Then move onto “Honor” and then “Thanks”.

- Glory: God, it’s amazing that you _____.
- Honor: God, I choose (or want or surrender) _____ to you.
- Thanks: God, thank you for _____.

Life-giving Truth (about 45-55 min)

There are a lot of questions here. Your Life Group Coach will pick out a few below that are best suited for your Life Group to help process this week’s Life-giving Truth. Don’t try to answer every question – just think through a few together.

1. Last week's truth: Did you think about last week's Life-giving Truth *Love Grows in the crucible of suffering*? Was there a situation in your life this week when this Life-giving Truth was (or could have been) applicable?

2. Read through Romans 12:9-21. Then, read again verse 10: What do you think it would look like to “Outdo one another in showing honor”? Look at the other commands in verses 9-12. What commands here, if followed, would have the effect of showing honor to other people?

3. Grace is both pardon and power. It's pardon in that “by grace you are saved”, for there is nothing we can do to merit our forgiveness or salvation (Eph 2:8-9). But it's also power. Enabling power by God to his children so that they might follow his commands. Read Titus 2:11-12 and 1 Cor. 15:10. How do these verses show us that grace is “power” for us to live godly lives?

4. Read Matthew 5:43-48. What similarities do you find between what Jesus said in this passage and what Paul said in Romans 12:9-21?

5. Read this quote from Tedd Tripp that Pastor Tom shared on Sunday: "*It doesn't take grace from God to ignore the oppressor. It doesn't take supernatural grace to stand up for your rights. To do good to oppressors, however, to pray for those who mistreat you, to entrust yourself to the just Judge, requires a person to come face-to-face with the poverty of his own spirit and his need of the transforming power of the gospel.*" (Shepherding a Child’s Heart, p. 17) What are some areas in your life or relationships that you feel the need for grace? Consider, after you have shared, praying healing prayer for each other right now instead of during the time for Life-giving relationships.

6. Read Romans 12:20-21. Then read about David and King Saul from 1 Samuel 24:1-17 (pay specific attention to what David says in verse 12 and what Saul says in verse 17). How is David resting in God's sovereignty and not forcing his own agenda?

7. Read Romans 12:20. Then find where it is quoted by looking at your cross-reference. Notice what part of the Old Testament text Paul doesn't quote. This doesn't mean Paul didn't believe this unquoted part of the verse – to the contrary, he expects you to know the context and supply this information. How does this match with what Jesus said in Matthew 5:46?

8. “I’m so fed up with how unfair love is”, said a frustrated Jarrod. “I feel like I just give and give and it's hardly ever reciprocated. Is there some sort of 'limitation clause' somewhere in the Bible that says I can stop loving hard people after I've made a decent effort?” Do you hear where Jarrod is coming from? How would you answer him...is there a limit on when we can stop loving those God has put in our sphere?

Life-giving Relationships (about 5-10 min)

Does anyone want healing prayer this week? Remember, this is praying for the heart of you, the person, not the circumstances you are going through or other people in your life. Is there anything churning in your heart that we can pray for?

Life-giving Impact (about 10 min)

1. Does anyone have any Pray & Watch stories from this week? Did you make a plan and follow through with getting together with anyone on your Pray & Watch list?
2. Get your Pray & Watch list. Let’s spend our last minute or two together praying over all these names together.