

Beauregard Worship Center



2014 DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

The Love Walk Lesson 3 – The Ministry of Love

Introduction

- Welcome to BWC's Discipleship Training class on The Love Walk – Lesson 3! This week we will be learning more about the Ministry of Love and how each of us has been called to this ministry.
- In this class we will be discussing:
 - ▣ The Different Ways of Loving People
 - ▣ Loving People Through Prayer
 - ▣ Loving Difficult People with God's Love
 - ▣ Getting Healed when You Get Wounded
 - ▣ Our High Calling – Loving People

Different Ways of Loving People

- You've heard the saying "there is more than one way to skin a cat"? Well, there are different ways to love people into the Kingdom of God, which is our ultimate goal.
- Last week we learned about the fruit of the Spirit and how cultivating that fruit gives us the ability to love with the God Love—Agape love to those around us.
- Cultivating the fruits of the Spirit is critical in successfully loving people as a ministry.

Different Ways of Loving People

- What are some of the ways that we can love people with God's love that will really make a difference in their lives?
 - Intercessory Prayer
 - Acts of Kindness
 - Practical Help
 - A Listening Ear
 - A Word in Season
 - Establish a Friendship
 - Introduce Them to Jesus

Different Ways of Loving People

- Let's look closer at these different ways of loving people into the Kingdom of God. Remember, God is depending on each of us to be His Heart to people, whether they are of the household of God or lost sinners steeped in the vilest sin.
- We can begin the ministry of love even when we are in the process of cultivating the fruits of the Spirit. How? By pursuing the gift of love from the Father. By pursuing the gift of love, we show the Father we are serious about His plans for our lives.

Loving People Through Prayer

- Prayer is the most powerful way to love someone into the kingdom of God. How does God feel about it?
 - “I have set watchmen upon your walls, O Jerusalem, who will never hold their peace day or night; you who [are His servants and by your prayers] put the Lord in remembrance [of His promises], keep not silence, and give Him no rest until He establishes Jerusalem and makes her a praise in the earth.” (Isaiah 62:6-7)

Loving People Through Prayer

- “And I looked, but there was no one to help; I was amazed and appalled that there was no one to uphold [truth and right]. So My own arm brought Me victory, and My wrath upheld Me.” (Isaiah 63:5)
- “And no one calls on Your Name and awakens and bestirs himself to take and keep hold of You; for You have hidden Your face from us and have delivered us into the [consuming] power of our iniquities.” (Isaiah 64:7)

Loving People Through Prayer

- ❑ “And He saw that there was no man and wondered that there was no intercessor [no one to intervene on behalf of truth and right]; therefore His own arm brought Him victory, and His own righteousness [having the Spirit without measure] sustained Him.” (Isaiah 59:16)
- ❑ “And I sought a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none.” (Ezekiel 22:30)
- ❑ “You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and I have appointed you [I have planted you], that you might go and bear fruit and keep on bearing, and that your fruit may be lasting , so that whatever you ask the Father in My Name, He may give it to you.” (John 15:16)

Loving People Through Prayer

- As you can see from these scriptures, God is looking for people to pray, to stand in the gap for the lost and those in trouble.
- God's eyes are moving to and fro over the earth looking for love, looking for faith and looking for intercessors.
- It appalls Him when He can't find an intercessor. He doesn't want to bring judgment on a person or a nation. He wants to love them. His heart is full of love for all men. Prayer plays an important role in loving people!

Loving People Through Prayer

- There is never a shortage of people to pray for. Just look around you and you will see so many people in desperate need of someone to pray for them.
- Prayer activates heaven on behalf of a person! So many people these days are growing up without ANY knowledge of God. As a result you have very cold, very cruel people. If there is no light, then darkness prevails. And where darkness is, there is no warmth. Prayer shines the light in the darkness and the love of God; the warmth of God's love will begin to move towards that person. Only heaven will show how much God appreciates our prayers for the lost and the brethren alike.

Loving People Through Prayer

- What are some practical ways to love people through prayer?
 - Ask the Lord to give you a person to pray for. To pray into the kingdom of God. Believe me HE WILL! He is looking for people to pray!
 - Begin to pray for that person every day. Pray for them to come to Jesus, to bear much fruit, to be healed and set free.
 - Ask God to send laborers into their path to minister the gospel of Jesus to them. Or ask for a chance to talk to them.
 - You will see that as time goes on, God will begin to move in their life and one day, an opportunity will arise to minister the love of God to them: the greatest love is Jesus' salvation.

Word Study on Prayer

- 1 Timothy 2:1
- Romans 8:26
- Ephesians 6:18
- Isaiah 62:6
- Jude 1:20
- Hebrews 11:6
- Matthew 21:22
- Acts 1:14



Acts of Kindness

- We talked a little on kindness last week. Since kindness is a fruit of the Spirit, a great way to cultivate that fruit is to be kind!
- If we ask the Lord to show us ways we can show the love of God through acts of kindness, He will begin to use us in ways we never imagined!
- I challenge you..and me too. To ask the Lord, to use you this week to show kindness to someone He knows is in desperate need of loving kindness.
- He will do it!

Practical Help

- We can say that kindness is “love with skin on.” What constitutes kindness? Kindness can be:
 - A warm friendly smile
 - Helping someone with a problem; like the elderly lady with her groceries.
 - Mowing your neighbor’s grass when you know they are too feeble to do it.
 - Bringing a dish to a neighbor you know is sick or recovering from surgery.
 - Sending a card to someone who has lost a loved one.
 - Stopping by to pray with someone who is in a depression.
 - Bringing groceries to someone who has need of food and supplies

Word Study on Acts of Kindness

- Ephesians 4:32
- John 15:13
- Luke 6:38
- John 13:34
- Acts 20:35
- Luke 6:21-31
- I Corinthians 13:4
- I John 3:18
- Ephesians 4:2



A Listening Ear

- Sometimes all a person needs is someone to listen to them. It helps get toxic emotions out in the open to talk to someone who has a listening ear.
- Be that listening ear to someone. It may get tedious to listen but it is a kindness to someone else who really needs someone to open up to.
- A great opportunity awaits you when you listen to someone's trial and storm of life. The Lord may want to use YOU to bring inner healing into that person's life or your words can bring peace and comfort to them.
- A listening ear can help in ways that are not visible and you may never know until heaven how your act of kindness to just listen brought someone hope for a better tomorrow.

A Listening Ear

- What are some practical ways we can be that listening ear?
 - Call someone up that you know is housebound and alone and just check on them. Let them know you are thinking about them. Ask if they need anything or if you can pray for them. They will probably talk your ear off, but that is OK!
 - Start going by the nursing home or hospital and visit with the elderly there. They would love someone to talk to. Some of those people have no one who cares for them.
 - Begin listening to your spouse more attentively, or your children or grandchildren.

A Listening Ear

- When we begin to make a focused effort to really listen to people, God will open up a whole new world of ministry opportunities for us.
- Like the song says: “Open our ears Lord, help us to listen”

WORD STUDY ON A LISTENING EAR

- James 1:27
- Proverbs 8:14
- Proverbs 15:22
- Job 29:21
- Psalm 73:24
- Psalm 32:8



A Word in Season

- Isaiah 50:4 says “[The Servant of God says] The Lord God has given Me the tongue of a disciple and of one who is taught, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary. He wakens Me morning by morning, He wakens My ear to hear as a disciple [as one who is taught.]”
- The Servant of God is Jesus Christ. As we see all over the gospels, He went about speaking a Word in season to all who were weary. And He has passed that on to US!

A Word in Season

- What kind of situations are ripe for a word in season?
 - A co-worker has lost a loved one through death.
 - A neighbor is going through a nasty divorce.
 - A friend's son has gone off to war in a foreign country.
 - An acquaintance you meet at the library or the doctor's office, or the DMV tells you of a bad report from the doctor.
 - The situations can go on and on..you get the picture. The point is: life is FULL of opportunities to give a “word in season” to someone who really needs to hear it.

A Word in Season

- I'm not talking about saying "pat" statements that everyone else says to someone who is hurting. I'm talking about speaking God's anointed Word into their lives.
- This comes through an intimate relationship with Him that enables us to hear Him when He tells us what to say.
- The scripture in Isaiah said "given Me the tongue of a disciple and of one who is taught"...who teaches? God teaches! The Holy Spirit teaches! That can only come when we spend time in His Presence.

A Word in Season

- How can we move into this part of love?
 - First, spend more time in His presence.
 - Second, ask Him to use you to speak into people's lives that you come across in your every day life.
 - Third, if you aren't already, establish daily scripture reading to get the Word into your heart. For out of the heart the mouth speaks.
 - Fourth, be ready when you hear the Holy Spirit tell you to speak to a certain person, a certain thing. You'll learn to recognize His voice, then you can flow with it!

Word Study on A Word in Season

- Mark 11:22-24
- Proverbs 18:21
- 2 Corinthians 4:13
- 2 Corinthians 4:18
- Matthew 12:34-36
- Joshua 1:8
- Romans 10:17
- Romans 4:17



Establish A Friendship

- How can you establish a friendship with someone who is in need of Jesus? By doing all the things mentioned above.
 - When God gives you someone to bring into the kingdom, it all starts with prayer. Start praying for them.
 - Then do little acts of kindness, even if it's just a warm smile and a “good morning” at first.
 - Be there to listen. People can sense when you are willing to really listen.
 - Speak that word in season as the Holy Spirit leads you to. He knows what will go straight to their heart.
 - All these things will show that person that you can be a good friend to them.

Establish A Friendship

- A word of warning: You can be a friend to a lost person, but you can't partake of their lifestyle. Say they love to go dancing in the clubs on weekends. You can't go. You will be compromising before them and it will only reinforce their negative view of the Lord.
- Establishing a friendship is a TRUE friendship. It's being there when their life falls apart. They will remember the peace and the word in season you spoke to them. They'll come to your level. Don't go down to theirs thinking you can "save" them. That is God's job, not yours.

Word Study on Establishing A Friendship

- Proverbs 4:23
- Romans 12:1-2
- 1 Corinthians 15:33
- 2 Corinthians 6:14-18
- 1 Timothy 5:1-2
- Proverbs 17:17
- Proverbs 27:6
- Proverbs 27:9-10



Introduce Them to Jesus

- Eventually, there will come a day when the person you have been praying for, being kind to and being a friend to, will be open to hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- It may come during a crisis or crossroads in their life or they may just want what you have! Be ready to introduce them to Jesus.
- Be prepared to lead them to Jesus, get them baptized in the Holy Spirit too! Be ready to lay hands on them for inner healing or physical healing.
- That's what Jesus did and that is what we are supposed to be doing too.

Loving Difficult People with God's Love

- Everyone can immediately think of someone who is very difficult to love. Some people are just plain mean and they like being mean.
- Jesus ran across these types of people too. They were probably the ones tearing His beard out of His face on the way to the Cross.
- Some people are so hard to love, it's just easier to hate them and be done with it. We wonder how in the world God can love them! They are so evil and wicked and mean! Yet He does love them.

Loving Difficult People with God's Love

- The hardest part of loving difficult people with God's love is for you and me to get on board with loving them in the first place!
- God needs our cooperation to love these people. Last week we looked at Mabel and Ethel and their approach to loving mean old Agnes into the kingdom of God.
- Guess where loving difficult people start? If you said "prayer" you are correct! It all starts with prayer.

Loving Difficult People with God's Love

- One thing we must remember: everyone has a story. There is a reason why people do and say the things they do.
- It is from this angle that Agape love comes. It looks at the person's story. At WHY they are hateful, why they are cold and unfeeling, why they lie and cheat, why they beat loved ones, why they are drug addicts and drunks, why they are addicted to sex. There is a story behind all of this. This is what God sees. God sees the little boy or girl who loved Him before life tore them apart.

Loving Difficult People with God's Love

- So how do we begin to love the difficult people in our lives? We all have them.
- It starts with a simple prayer to the Father that you are willing to start loving the difficult ones for His sake. This is a critical step because without your agreement, the Lord will have to find someone else to use.
- Think of it this way: We are storing up treasures in heaven with our words, our faith and our love. Loving a difficult person into the kingdom is reward in itself!

Loving Difficult People with God's Love

- Jesus said it plain in *Matthew 5:44-48*
 - “But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. To show that you are the children of your Father Who is in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the wicked and on the good, and makes the rain fall upon the upright and the wrongdoers alike.
 - For if you love those who love you, what reward can you have? Do not even the tax collectors do that? And if you greet only your brethren, what more than others are you doing? Do not even the Gentiles do that?
 - You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Loving Difficult People with God's Love

- Here are some ways to begin to love the difficult people in your life:
 - Make yourself available to God to be used to love them with Agape love.
 - Begin to pray for them every day
 - Ask the Lord to give you ideas to show His love to them.
 - Obey Him when He tells you to do something.
 - Use the fruit of the Spirit to love them into the kingdom.
 - Sooner or later you will see changes begin to happen in their life.
 - You never know but that YOU were placed in their life for such a time as this!

Getting Healed when You Get Wounded

- Anytime you interact with people, there is a risk of getting wounded. We talked about this in the School of Personal Ministry.
- You can get wounded from a close friend as easily as you can a very difficult person. The process of getting healed is the same.
- You need to get healed from the inside out as soon as possible after you are wounded. You have to forgive them and pray for them.

Getting Healed when You Get Wounded

- Run to Jesus for healing or run to the pastors to help you get inner healing from Jesus.
- Jesus has paid for all our wounds, inner and physical to be healed. It is ours for the taking.
- When the person you are trying to reach for Jesus can no longer hurt you, you know that you are growing up in Jesus. Because love pays no attention to a suffered wrong!
- Sooner or later, you will only see in them what Jesus sees. A broken down, torn apart person that He loves and wants to set free to fulfill the plan He has for them to do.

Getting Healed when You Get Wounded

- We all need to count the cost before we begin this love walk. We need to realize that we can and probably will get hurt along the way.
- We need to determine the pros and cons and are we willing to pay the price of loving people into the kingdom of God.
- Once we make the commitment to God to be used this way, we need to find out what steps to take to protect our selves from the thorns and thistles that go along with dealing with human beings.

Getting Healed when You Get Wounded

- ❑ Bathe the entire effort in prayer every day. Plead the Blood of Jesus over yourself and the person you are trying to minister to.
- ❑ Put on your armor every day.
- ❑ Continue to study the Word every day on how to love this person. Study the fruits of the Spirit.
- ❑ Look for opportunities to show kindness and the other fruits of the Spirit...ONLY as the Holy Spirit leads you to.

Getting Healed when You Get Wounded

- Pray for wisdom and discernment in dealing with this person.
- Be patient and don't have any unrealistic expectations. God deals with each person individually and He loves each person individually. He does not override a person's will.
- Keep cultivating those fruits. Let God use this assignment to not only lead a person to Him, but to also bring you to a new level of spiritual maturity!
- When you do get wounded, run to Him quickly for healing.

Our High Calling – Loving People

- We saw it in I Corinthians 12:31. Pursue the greatest gift of love. The highest call for a believer is to love the lost into the kingdom.
- Love is a gift, love is a fruit and love is a ministry. The ministry of love is one that is near and dear to the heart of God. Because He loves, loves, loves people! He is passionately in love with us...with ALL of us.
- When we allow Him to be used in the ministry of love, we are truly, truly part of bearing MUCH fruit for the kingdom of God!

Our High Calling – Loving People

- I encourage everyone in the coming weeks and months as the fruit of the Spirit is cultivated in your lives, to begin to seek out the ministry of love from God the Father.
- Love is something that catches His attention as much as faith does. His eyes go to and fro all over the earth looking for faith and looking for LOVE.
- The ministry of love is letting God love people through YOU.

Conclusion

- This lesson has shown that there are so many ways to love people into the kingdom of God and THAT is the true goal of God for us.
- If you take nothing away from this lesson, take this away: God wants to show people the reality of His love through us as believers.
- We have something so precious and rare that once people realize it is there, they want it too! Real LOVE is precious and rare in this evil world.
- Let God use you in this ministry, it has eternal rewards for you and the lost you bring in!