

Love is Patient, Love is Kind – Session Two

40 Days of Love

Session Two

Love is Patient, Love is Kind

Motley Crew Group Session Notes

March 3, 2010

We opened with prayers of thanksgiving and petition.

CATCHING UP

Pastor Eddie emphasized that when we face God, the question will be the nature of our relationship to Christ, and will include how we loved “the least of Mine,” that is, as written in Matthew 25:

31"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. **32**All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. **33**He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

34"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. **35** For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, **36** I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

But this service is not to boast, but, rather, to fulfill what God wants us to do.

There was a question about whether or not there is a hierarchy in heaven? Pastor Eddie noted that there was a lot of Biblical support for this. As Lutherans, we sometimes shy away from good works for the wrong reasons. Since we're already saved by grace, we should be leading the pack in doing good works, since this reflects our faith.

There was a discussion about the Epistle of James, which Luther referred to as a “Straw Gospel.” However, Luther's writings are not in the canon, and the book of James is. We don't, and haven't, always supported all of Luther's writings, especially his writings about the Jews.

Jerry mentioned an email that he had received about the deaths of the Apostles. The upshot was that 11 of the 12 Apostles died as martyrs of their faith (the exception was John). It is important to note that no one is willing to die for a lie.

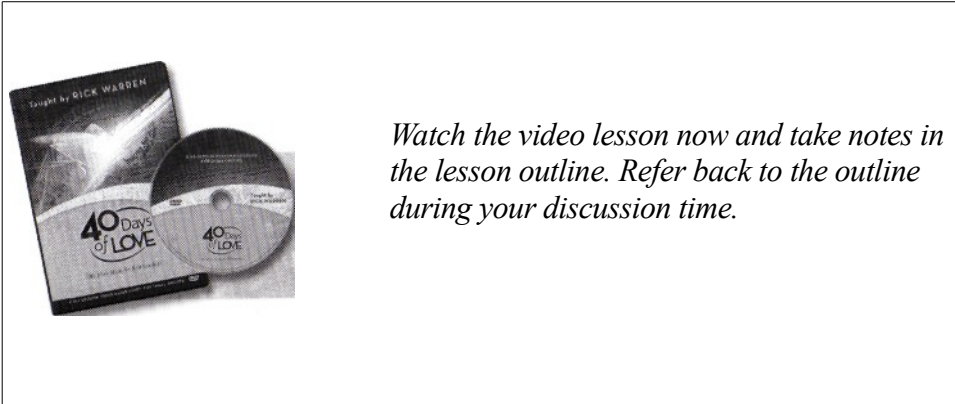
Finally, reflecting on last week's readings and video, we cannot command emotions, but command actions ... and the emotions will follow. We can command acts of love, even though we might not initially feel an emotion of love. However, by practicing acts of love, the feelings of love often follow.

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KEY VERSE

Love is patient, love is kind.

1 Corinthians 13:4 (NIV)



This week we continue to look at loving as Jesus loved, and as seen in I Corinthians 13. The first two parts of this are *patience* and *kindness*.

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Part I. The Secret to Patience

You cooperate with God.

- **God's part is to provide the circumstances**
- **Your Part is to provide the response**

³ We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials for we know that they are good for us— they help us learn to be patient. ⁴And patience develops strength of character in us and helps us trust God more each time we use it until finally our hope and faith are strong and steady. (Romans 5:3-4 LB)

Ultimately, problems and trials are put before us by God as a means for our personal growth.

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THREE THINGS WILL HELP YOU RESPOND WITH PATIENCE

1. Discover a bigger perspective

A man's *wisdom* gives him *patience*; it is to his glory to overlook an offense. (Proverbs 19:11 NIV)

2. Deepen your love – a patience builder.

When you're filled with love, almost nothing will irritate you. But when you're filled with anger, almost anything will irritate you.

Pastor Rick talked about a cup of coffee. If the cup filled with love is jiggled, love will spill out. But if the cup is filled with anger, irritation will spill out.

3. Depend on Jesus' power

We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy. (Colossians 1:11 NLT)

“I'm going to be patient *if it kills me!!!* This won't work unless we're first filled with Jesus' love.

Patience is an attitude. Kindness is the result. If we want to be like Jesus, we must start here: *seeing* the needs of those around us.

Part II. The Secret to Kindness

Kindness is love in action

FOUR LESSONS FROM THE GOOD SAMARITAN (Luke 10:30-35)

This is a story about kindness.

Luke 10:30-35 (New International Version)

30 ... Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. **31** A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. **32** So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. **33** But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. **34** He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and

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wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. **35** The next day he took out two silver coins[a] and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

Footnotes:

- a. [Luke 10:35](#) Greek two denarii

Several notes. According to the *Archeological Study Bible*, Jerusalem to Jericho was a distance of 17 miles and a descent of 2,744 feet; the road ran through rocky, desert terrain, which provided natural hiding places for lurking robbers to waylay defenseless travelers. The Jews viewed Samaritans as half-breeds, both physically and spiritually. The Samaritans and Jews were openly hostile towards one another. *Archeological Study Bible* (2005), p. 1691 n. Thus, for a Samaritan to help a Jew, or a Jew to help a Samaritan, was virtually unthinkable.

1. Start seeing the needs of people around us.

Kindness always begins with the eyes; it is a function of how we look at others. If we are aware, they we can care.

When he *saw* the man's condition, his heart went out to him. (Luke 10:33 MSG)

Why don't we see the wounds of the people around us? **busyness, which is the death of love.**

To be a kinder person, you must slow down. There is no time to be kind if we are too busy. Slowness = love.

Look out for the good of others also. (1 Corinthians 10:24 NCV)

Our modern culture seems to have put a high premium on our calendars, PDA s, etc. Too often, we say no when we're afraid that we will disappoint/inconvenience the next person on our daily calendar. And, too often, we don't say no, which leads to calendars that are *too* busy.

Several members of the group shared stories.

Rate yourself: Do I **see** the needs of others? (Sensitivity)

1	2	3	4	5
I really need to work on this	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Everything is great

Several members of the group shared stories.

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2. Sympathize with people's pain.

Learn to look, and then learn to listen.

When he **saw** him, his heart was **filled with pity**. (Luke 10:33 TEV)

Weep with those who *weep*. (Romans 12:15 TEV). In other words, feel what others feel.

Sympathy begins with the ears.

Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2 NLT). The “law of Christ” here means to love your neighbor as yourself.

We don't always have to be “Mr. Fixit.” Often, we just need to listen.

Rate yourself: Do I listen to the needs of others? (Sympathy)

1	2	3	4	5
No, I don't pay attention at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Yes, I'm a good listener

It's always good to practice ... we won't ever be perfect, but we can get a lot better.

So what we have now is:

1. See.
2. Sympathize.
3. Seize the moment (*Carpe Diem*)

Do it now! Take action!

3. Seize the Moment .

Kneeling beside him the Samaritan soothed his wounds with medicine and bandaged them. (Luke 10:34 LB)

The Good Samaritan did three things:

- He stooped down and got on the man's level. [It's important to note that he came down to the level of the injured man; he wasn't *looking* down on the man, but *getting* down!]
- He used what he had (wine and oil). [Oil and wine were used for their healing effects]

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in those days. *Archeological Study Bible* (2005), p. 1691 n. The Samaritan used what he had.]

- He dressed him with bandages (he tore up his own clothes).

The Good Samaritan did what he could with what he had at that particular moment.

Never walk away from someone who deserves help; your hand is God's hand for that person. (Proverbs 3:27 MSG). [When motivated to do good, do it right away. Don't wait. There's no guarantee of a tomorrow. Do it now. Practice spontaneous kindness! Carpe Diem!]

Never tell your neighbors to wait until tomorrow if you can help them now. (Proverbs 3:28 TEV)

To be a kinder person like the Good Samaritan:

- You must be willing to be interrupted. [Your whole schedule might get blown. So what? Love is the first priority.]
- You must be willing to take risks. [Robbers? A trap? Ethnic opposition?]

Sometimes we don't help because of our own pain that we've often suppressed. If I help, my pains might boil up to the surface. But if I ignore this pain, then my pain is suppressed.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear. (1 John 4:18 NASB)

Love pushes out fear. The love of God points us in the right direction.

A lot of times, God uses the pain of others to get me to face my own pain. "Be careful what you pray for," cautioned the Rev. Peter Marshall, "because God might call your bluff!"

These ratings ... they can change from day to day, and even from morning to evening. They're not cast in stone.

Seek quality over quantity.

Rate yourself: How quickly do I respond to a need when I see it? (Spontaneous Kindness)

1	2	3	4	5
I intend to do it but don't *	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	I act immediately

* Living on "Someday Island"?

4. Spend whatever it takes.

There is always a **cost** to kindness. There's always a price tag of some sort ... time, money, reputation, etc.

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³⁴ "Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. ³⁵The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, 'Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here.'" (Luke 10:34-35 NLT)

Pastor Rick pointed out that two silver coins (two Greek denarii) were the equivalent of two days wages.

Kindness is doing something for somebody without expecting anything in return. Here, the Samaritan got nothing in return; this is *agape* love.

Why?

1. Because God loved me first.
2. Because God wants it.
3. Because God will meet *your* needs in return.

⁷Share your food with the hungry and bring poor, homeless people into your own homes. . . .
⁸Then your light will shine like the dawn. . . . "The LORD will always lead you. He will satisfy your needs in dry lands. . . . You will be like a garden that has much water, like a spring that never runs dry. (Isaiah 58:7, 8, 11 NCV)

The LORD is merciful! He is kind and patient, and his love never fails. (Psalm 103:8 CEV)

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' (Matthew 25:34-36 NIV)

These are the first two steps in our 40 Days of Love:

1. Love is patient.
2. Love is kind.

If we are going to live like Jesus, we need to ask Jesus to act lovingly through us.

We closed the DVD with prayer.

Discovery Questions

*Each of these questions provoked discussion among the group members.
What are your thoughts?*

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1. Which was the greater risk for the Samaritan — helping in the immediate crisis, or coming back to follow up in a longer-term commitment? Why?
2. Pastor Rick compared our lives to a full cup. If a cup filled with coffee is jiggled, coffee spills out. What spills out of your life when you are "jiggled"?

Are you filled with patience or impatience? Kindness or indifference? What do your reactions to difficult people and situations reveal about the content of your character cup?

Don't let things get stored up ... take care of them as they come.

4. What can you do to make sure you are filled with the right stuff?

Being here with the Motley Crew on Wednesdays and in the church on Sundays is a good first start. Ultimately, it's the love of Jesus and the Word of God written on our hearts.

Our "homework" is to think about a group mission, and discuss this next week.

Living on Purpose: Ministry

It would have been easier for the Samaritan if he had not been alone as he helped the injured man.

What can your group do together to express love to a hurting person outside your group? Have someone read the **Reaching Out Together** instructions that follow. Begin to discuss ideas for a group ministry project.

Reaching Out Together

Reaching Out Together is a practical action of love your group will do for someone.

1. Plan an event when your group can reach out to a person in your church, community, or beyond.
2. Do something practical. It doesn't have to be big to be significant.
3. Ask God to show you what he would have you do. Some ideas to get you started:
 - Babysit for a single parent in your neighborhood.
 - Bring a meal to a family in need.

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- Offer to mow a neighbor's yard.
 - Have all the families in your group collect their giveaway clothes together and take them to a shelter or organization in your community.
 - Find someone in your community who is facing tough times and visit them and pray with them as a group.
 - Volunteer to tutor kids at your neighborhood school.
 - Prepare a welcome basket for someone new in your community. Drop it off and get to know them.
 - Pinpoint a house in your neighborhood that needs some help. Reach out to the family and offer to paint a fence, fix the porch, etc. (Keep it small but heartfelt.)
 - Offer to help in the public library reading to kids.
 - Offer to clean up a local beach.
 - Volunteer at a homeless shelter in your community.
4. Aim to begin the Reaching Out Together project by your last session.

We closed with prayer.