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Introduction to the Love Course

The Love Course is a discipleship tool developed to encourage people to live and love like Jesus. Ideal for small groups, discipleship groups, or Sunday School, the five-part series includes chapter-by-chapter devotional questions and FREE MP3 files of each lesson. Download the lecture series from seeJesus.net.

Suggested Steps for Each Small Group Session

Before meeting together:

1. Listen to the FREE MP3 file available for download on seeJesus.net, following along in your notebook.
2. Do the six-day devotional, along with any additional reading.

While meeting together:

1. Discuss the Love Course lesson with your small group or disciple.
2. Discuss the answers to the devotional questions.
3. Have group prayer time for one aspect of Christ-likeness.
4. Hand in devotional to the group leader for comments (optional).

Elements of the Course. This manual and the mp3 files that accompany it constitute only the framework of the Love Course. The heart of it is the one-on-one work in counseling, the small group times, large group discussions of the lecture, and the interaction and feedback on the Love Course. We welcome any comments on how we can improve the delivery of the course, its content, or its structure.

Illustrations. Some Figures have been relabeled and reorganized for ease of use. The mp3 files refer to Figures in an older version of this course. Where there is a discrepancy, refer to this book as your guide to locate Figures, rather than the mp3 files. Also, some names and events used in these notes and lectures have been altered for privacy.

Note: The pronoun “he” is used generically throughout the text because it is awkward to do otherwise.

Acknowledgments. I am thankful to Roy Shirley, counselor and co-director of Cornerstone Center for Change. Roy gave gentle feedback on structure, content, and group dynamics. He led the groups in our pilot courses as we sought constantly to make the material of the course practical. I am also very thankful to Dave Powlison of CCEF for his thoughtful interaction and review of the material. Dr. Clair Davis, Professor of Church History at Westminster Seminary, was a great encouragement to me in the development of the course.



Summary of the Love Course Units

This
Unit



► Part 1. Entering the Compassion of Jesus.

Jesus' compassion is the very center of his being, the principle way that he relates to people. Jesus shows compassion by incarnating, by stepping into other people's shoes. It is an entirely different way of approaching people—one that moves away from judging and begins by looking. This whole movement towards people is inseparable from being in step with the Spirit.

Part 2. Entering the Honesty of Jesus.

Jesus' compassion is balanced by his honesty. His other-centered honesty is stunning. Jesus is completely free from other people's opinions so he is free to speak truth into their lives. Compassion without honesty leads to co-dependency. Honesty without compassion leads to harshness.

Part 3. Entering the Oneness of Jesus.

The goal of love is oneness. Love isn't just a series of actions, but it is a whole movement towards another person where you become one with them. The heart of this movement is a death for that other person. Death is at the center of love. The result, as in Jesus' life, is either resurrection joy or the sadness of death. Knowing the limits of oneness prepares you for sadness. The result of a dying love is deeper intimacy with the Father.

Part 4. Entering the Dependence of Jesus.

Jesus' dependence on his heavenly Father is at the foundation of all his love, shaping his compassion and his honesty. His surrender to his Father frees him not to be bound by other people. He is free to say no to people some times, and then at other times be overwhelmed by other people's needs. This is the subtlest, most difficult aspect of love to master.

Part 5. Entering the Passion of Jesus.

The Passion is one of the most neglected parts of Christianity. Its dark strains and bloody, brutal ending have not been attractive to a culture that wants feel-good stories. It is a trip into the interior of the gospel. In the Passion we discover what God is like under incredible pressure; we discover the very structures of love. As Jesus confronts an onslaught of evil he lowers himself in humility. His heart is like a gigantic sponge absorbing evil. With his life under a microscope we can see Jesus love in the face of evil. He is the champion of love as he confronts, rebukes, encourages, grieves, waits, endures, and cares. Jesus is anything but passive. He is constantly moving towards people. The early church was so shocked by Jesus' love in the Passion that martyrdom became the "prize" of the early church. Everyone wanted to die like Jesus died. He set a new gold standard for love.

Mary's Letter

Dear Paul,

I've been wanting to write ever since we got your June letter mentioning that you wanted to develop a course on love. I was really excited to hear that because, since we took the Sonship course years ago, my lack of love has become increasingly clear to me. "Teach me to love," "Usher me into your love that it can flow through me to others" and "May the fact that I am dead to sin and risen to righteousness, flesh itself out by Christ in me loving those around me" have been the cries of my heart for at least eight years. And not seeing the needed changes has been a great temptation to unbelief and despair.

There are many obviously broken people in my life: people like Pamela. People who have been horribly abused. People who may never look "good" on the outside. These people, with their obvious needs, are easier for me to love (although it is messy trying to discern speaking the truth in love from impatience, for example). Even though their sin and struggle have cost me a great deal (like now when the two-year-old and baby of another broken friend have been living with us while their mom, Amy, is in psychiatric care), God has given me compassion on them. My struggle there is how to love fully and freely without having a life of unlimited obligations.

Right now I am struggling with what it means to love the web of people connected to these two little children. It seems to me that loving their mother, Amy, means helping her find a safe place to live, something she's never experienced, since she was brutally abused as a child and wants to learn to take care of her own badly neglected children. Then how do I love Amy's mother, a deaf woman at our church, when she says if Amy doesn't come back and live with her (as she always has), she will commit suicide (like she attempted the last time Amy tried to move out and like her own mother did)? And how do we love this little two-year-old who already exhibits symptoms of sexual abuse who won't make eye contact, whose responses have shut down, and who resists even a hug? How do I love Amy's boyfriend when he has threatened to kill these two children if Amy ever tries to break up with him? Amy gave him my phone number because she wanted me to help him, then urged me not to let him know the children were here because he might try to kill them. How do I have compassion for him when I think he has done horrible things to such a little child? How can I love these kids fully and not hate him, but remember that he, like me, needs the grace of God? One thing I know is that fallen people loving other fallen people in this fallen world is messy. Sometimes horribly messy.

Like the men you mentioned in your July 7th letter, however, my deepest struggle with love is in living compassionately with those closest to me.

Just recently God has been showing me that my problem with love (at least

one layer of my sin in this area) is that performance orientation (or law) still goes deeper in me than the gospel. Somehow, I have tacked the gospel on top of a performance orientation foundation. The result is that I believe I am joined with Jesus and I know Jesus in me can love others, so I claim that, then move forth in faith to do loving acts. But because I have not given up my performance orientation, I am deeply angry with those close to me for not performing better (that this anger is also strongly self-directed because of my own performance doesn't help).

Ever since childhood I have tried to be outwardly good. As a female and a kid with alcoholic parents, that meant never being angry. It's taken years for me to see that I haven't recognized anger, not because it's absent, but because it's such a powerful and pervasive backdrop for every aspect of my life that I don't know anything else. So learning to deal with anger (specifically against those, myself included, who do not perform well) is a crucial step for me in entering into God's love. And, though I am much more sophisticated and play the part on the outside, I figure I deal with anger about as effectively as a strong-willed two-year-old.

John, our four-year-old, is a very angry person. A year ago, I began having him tell me every night all the things he was angry about. Some bedtime conversations now begin, "What is that number after 27? That's how many things I'm angry about tonight." We pray through each one. This summer we added a new step to our routine so, after we pray through the anger, he tells me an equal number of things he is thankful for. John is becoming more perceptive about the root of his anger. Last week he said, "I'm angry because everyone in the whole world won't obey me." ("So am I, John," I had to admit.) The other day, when we were discussing his anger, John said, "I just want to be God." ("Me too," I echoed.) Though we had worked for two years to train, encourage and discipline John, nothing helped him to quit punching people he was mad at. . . until building this habit of taking all of his anger to God every night. He is becoming a less angry, more yielded person.

Recently, I was so angry by John's bedtime that when he said he was angry, I answered, "So am I." He asked me why I was angry and we prayed together. It was a sweet moment.

On a deep level, the Leadership Training material addressed performance orientation, without using the term. I know that without grace, I am sunk. I know that Christ accepts me and, joined with Christ, I accept others. I know that Christ forgave me and, in Him, I forgive others. And I know that the powerful gospel has really changed me. But, there is still too much in me of love as doing things for others. And that doing so often means guiding, manipulating, cajoling, praying, pushing and encouraging them in the directions I believe they should go (in other words, wanting to be God), then being impatient and angry when they don't even want to move in that direction. Motivating people to change is at the heart of every relationship I have. I never used to understand why I was so motivated to change people. Now I see that it is because I have not given up the roots of the law (only the upper branches, perhaps). Performance orientation is, deep down, still my

basic approach to life. So learning to love people when they are outwardly closed to the gospel and want to cling to their idols has been a thorny area for me. What does it mean that love never gives up, if it does NOT mean love never gives up trying to change the other person?

Another eye opener for me, that hit a few years back, is that I view the world hierarchically. I walk into any situation, size up who has the power and play accordingly. Almost everyone is above me in the hierarchy, so I work for approval. There aren't many people I'd see as below me on the hierarchy, but those who are, need to get my approval (by changing in the needed directions, of course). Because of my own self-hatred, anyone who convinces me that they love me falls to the lowest spot. That is the core of my struggle with marriage.

God blessed me with a husband with an incredible gift in the area of pouring out love, understanding and compassion. Once he convinced me that he loved me, I no longer had to work for his approval and I lost all respect for him. Although Jesus, through the Sonship material, has changed me in many ways mentally (so I can say the right things, view others by faith and not by flesh, affirm that I am loved and accepted in Christ, and accept that those around me have the perfect record of Christ, deserving to be treated as such), for some reason my emotional world has not changed. (I know that love is not an emotion, but volumes of anger still need to be dealt with.)

Learning that real respect is a matter of who God is and what Christ has done, not who the other person is and what they have done, has been a big help. The implications of truths pressed home during the Sonship course were quite helpful in that area. . . .

Mary



Chapter I - Love & Jesus: An Introduction

- I. The Disciples and Their Character: What kinds of words come to mind? (Brainstorm, don't look ahead!)
 - A. Disciples
 1. James and John: we want to sit at your right and left hand (see Matthew 20:20-28).
 2. Thomas: "Let us also go, so that we may die with Him" (John 11:16); "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were..." (John 20:25).
 3. The disciples to Jesus: now you are making sense! (see John 16:29).
 4. Peter to Jesus: don't go to Jerusalem (see Mark 8:32).
 5. Philip to Jesus: "It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" (John 6:7).
 6. Nathanael: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46, NASB). Jesus enjoys his honesty.
 7. Disciples' character:
 - a. Typical: open stupidity, bumbling idiots, childish (What kind of age group acts like they do?)
 - b. Key: didn't live at two levels. Didn't secretly act on things. We might never say what they said but we might spend our whole life trying to be first.
 - c. Does our analysis of the disciples as bumbling idiots show us the immaturity of evangelical culture in defining true spirituality as niceness?
 - d. Truth: disciples are the most mature group of men in Israel. Jesus prizes that kind of honesty. He can't shape what isn't out on the table.
 - B. Pharisees
 1. "Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked. . ." (Luke 5:22).
 2. "[Simon] said to himself. . ." (Luke 7:39, NASB).
 3. "He was surprised that [Jesus]. . ." (Luke 11:38, NASB).
 4. "... watching Him closely. . ." (Luke 14:1, NASB).
 - C. Application: Jesus can't shape what isn't real. You must put what you think out on the table with your group. It doesn't mean that it is correct!
- II. Coming to Understand the Man
 - A. "Who would you like to meet in the Bible? What person?" No one answers Jesus. Why?
 1. Other worldly. He is so God, he is not human. Almost unreal.
 2. Jesus seems plastic, artificial. In movies: he always in slow motion, 1/3 speed, you want to stick a pin in him!
 3. Dostoevsky's *The Idiot* is weak and effeminate.
 4. Anne Angus, "When I get to heaven I look forward to sitting down with Peter. I can relate to him with all his struggles. But I'm not sure that I want to meet Jesus or know what he'd be like."
 - B. Jesus came alive when I evaluated him as a man.

1. Einstein

An Interview with Albert Einstein

- Q. "To what extent are you influenced by Christianity?"
- A. "As a child I received instruction both in the Bible and in the Talmud. I am a Jew, but I am enthralled by the luminous figure of the Nazarene."
- Q. "Have you read Emil Ludwig's book on Jesus?"
- A. "Emil Ludwig's Jesus is shallow. Jesus is too colossal for the pen of phrase-mongers, however artful. No man can dispose of Christianity with a bon mot."
- Q. "You accept the historical existence of Jesus?"
- A. "Unquestionably. No man can read the gospels without feeling the actual presence of Jesus. His personality pulsates in every word. No myth is filled with such life. How different, for instance, is the impression which we receive from an account of the legendary heroes of antiquity like Theseus! Theseus and other heroes of his type lack the authentic vitality of Jesus."
- Q. "Ludwig Lewisohn, in one of his recent books, claims that many of the sayings of Jesus paraphrase the sayings of other prophets."
- A. "No man can deny the fact that Jesus existed, nor that his sayings are beautiful. Even if some of them have been said before, no one expressed them so divinely as he."¹

2. Napoleon

Napoleon Encounters Jesus

"Napoleon, in his last days, turned to the Scriptures to find the meaning of life, which he had not found in all of his fame, and discovered who Jesus was. He said to General Bertrand, who was an atheist, 'I know men; and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires, and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist. We can say to the authors of every other religion, 'You are neither gods, nor the agents of the Deity.' What do these gods, so boastful, know more than other mortals; this Mohammed?—Absolutely nothing. They have made a perfect chaos of mortals. There is not one among them who has said anything new in reference to our future destiny, to the soul, to the essence of God, to the creation. Enter the sanctuary of paganism: you there find perfect chaos, a thousand contradictions, war between gods, the immobility of sculpture, the division and rending of unity, the parceling out of the divine attributes mutilated or denied in their essence. It is not so with Christ. Everything in him astonishes me. His spirit overawes me, and his will confounds me. Between him and whoever else in the world, there is no possible term of comparison. He is truly a Being by Himself. Bertrand, if you do not perceive that Jesus Christ is God, very well: then I did wrong to make you a general.'"²

C. Jesus' personhood as revealed in the Gospels.

1. Gospels are like raw, uncut videos
 - a. very little commentary in them
 - b. very crisp descriptions of scenes

“We must plead with God’s Spirit to reveal the sheer beauty of the character of Christ until the opportunity to know him, and to reflect him to others, becomes the stabilizing anchor during life’s toughest storms.”³

III. Seeing Jesus Is Inseparable from Learning How to Love

Modern emphasis in counseling: understand the roots of your sin. Very, very good. But even after you see your roots of sin, you’re left with wondering, how do I love? As we turn to Christ we have a plumb line, to learn how to love.

IV. Overview of the Course:

- A. Part 1. Compassion. The gospel writers are incredibly detailed in describing what compassion is. Looking at people is the first step.
- B. Part 2. Honesty. This builds on compassion. This was the central criteria in selecting the disciples. They didn’t perform. We’ll look more at Jesus in his anger, how this feeds his honesty, and what it means to be like him in his anger.
- C. Part 3. Oneness. The combination of compassion and honesty constantly results in oneness with people. We’ll look at how Jesus teaches and how he lives. We’ll see joy in oneness with people, and we’ll see Jesus’ sadness as he faces loss in relationships.
- D. Part 4. Dependence. We’ll look at how Jesus’ primary relationship with his Father controls his compassion, honesty, and affects his relationships. We’ll look at how Jesus surrenders his will to his Father, even to the cross.
- E. Part 5. Passion. Out of Jesus’ death springs hope that draws you into mystical union with Christ and the Father: drawing you deeper into the gospel, and into Jesus. Philip says to Jesus, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” Jesus says back to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?” (see John 14:8-9).

V. Learning to Love Draws You into the Life of Christ, into the Gospel

(Don’t worry about understanding all of this at this point in the course. I just want you to count the cost of learning to love.)

- A. Suffering follows belief in the gospel (Sonship)
 1. The glories of the gospel Paul describes: “But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father.’ So you are no

longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir" (Galatians 4:4-7).

2. Paul paraphrases this in Romans 8, detailing the fruits of believing this gospel: our justification by faith, his blood covering us. "The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory" (Romans 8:15-17).
3. Both passages share the same idea, but what phrase does Paul add in Romans? "If indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory..."

B. What is going on?

1. Somehow, Paul is tying together the knowledge of the gospel, that God is for me forever, with a literal sharing in Christ's suffering.
2. This is not existential suffering. Suffering on its own does not make this happen, but participating in His suffering does. "For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have" (Philippians 1:29-30). Paul knows believing leads to union with Christ in his literal suffering.

C. Even more, it is a passion for Paul.

1. "I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death..." (Philippians 3:10).
2. Paul wants this like kids want Christmas. It eats away at him, he thinks about it often during the day.
3. Somehow, being driven into the sufferings of Christ unleashes the knowledge of God in ways that you've never imagined. And the taste of it is so good that it becomes an obsession, an addiction.

D. Suffering and love: Why do the two go together?

1. We are evil. Love always involves binding yourself and your life to another person. This leads to suffering. Jesus bound himself to us at the cross. He took on himself all the agony, all the sin of his church. He suffered for us.
 - a. Ruth and Naomi. What does Ruth do? She binds herself to Naomi, and goes into the barley fields. That movement is the heart of love. Only in the barley fields do we discover the depths of God's love for us.
 - b. Listen to Paul's description of how this works, "We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you." (2 Corinthians 4:10-12). Paul continues on the death of Christ. This does not mean he adds anything to the death of Christ. That is a finished work. Paul is clear about this.
2. Notice the same language here: "For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in

you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort” (2 Corinthians 1:5-7).

3. “Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ’s afflictions...” (Colossians 1:24). Somehow, my love for you makes the finished work of Calvary vividly alive for both of us.
4. “Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered” (Hebrews 5:8, NASB). Awesome to think that Jesus grew in his ability to love. How does someone who is pure learn to love better? Jesus never experienced loneliness in heaven. He did at Gethsemane. He’s a better lover because he loved us.

VI. Summary

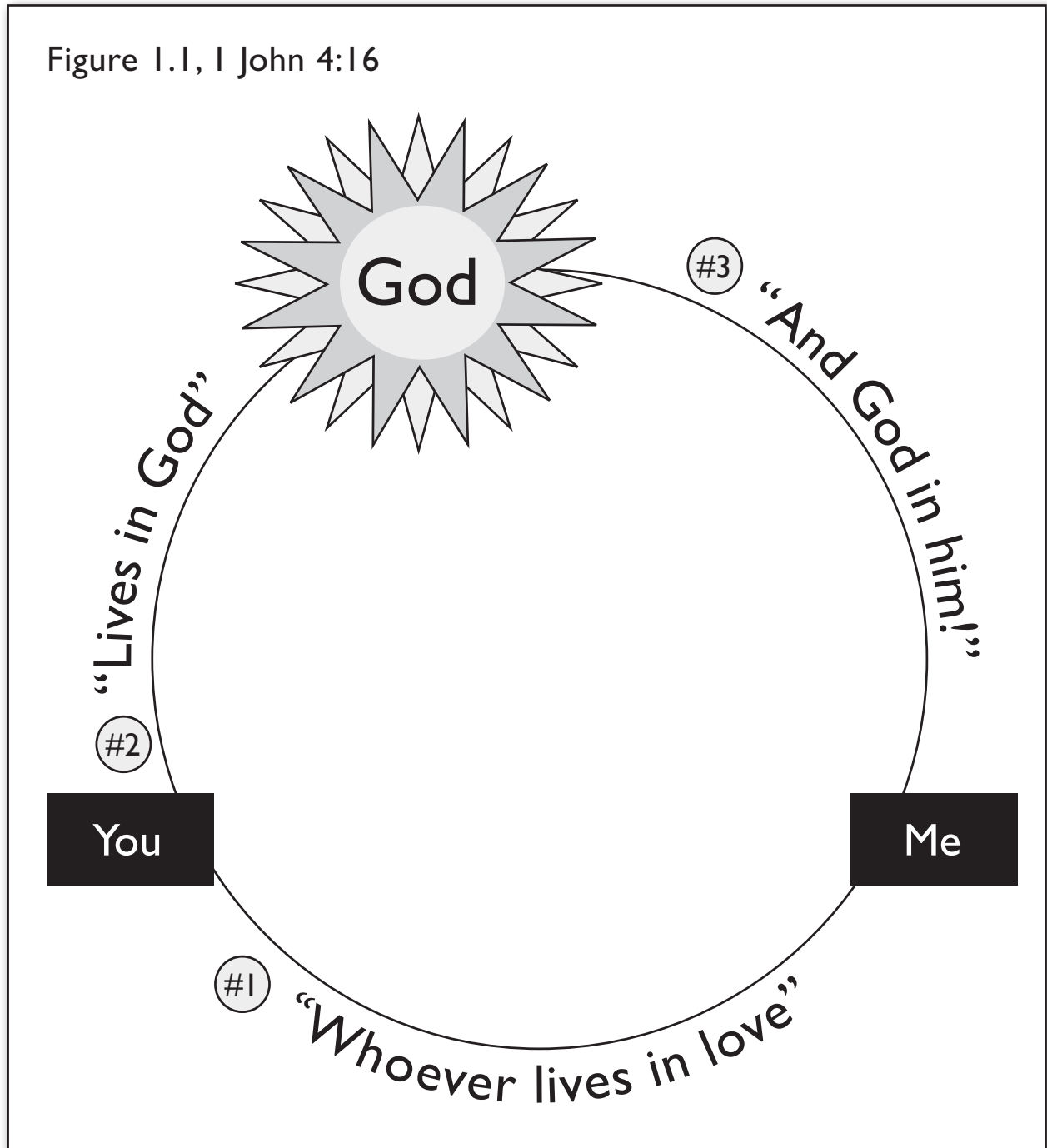
- A. This movement of love towards others is nothing less than a mystical union with Christ. (See Figure 1.1.)
- B. Paul puts it this way: “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me” (Galatians 2:20).
- C. Another way to summarize this: “This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us” (1 John 3:23, NASB).

VII. Importance of Silence

- A. Jesus’ instructions to his disciples
 1. “...He was not permitting the demons to speak” (Mark 1:34, NASB).
 2. “...and He said to him, ‘See that you say nothing to anyone’” (Mark 1:44, NASB).
 3. “...And He gave them strict orders that no one should know about this. . . .” (Mark 5:43).
 4. “And He gave them orders not to tell anyone; but the more He ordered them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it” (Mark 7:36, NASB).
 5. “And He sent him to his home, saying, ‘Do not even enter the village’” (Mark 8:26, NASB).
- B. Some reasons why:
 1. Let your life speak it first.
 2. Religious talk easily becomes a substitute for reality: You develop a vocabulary and you are “in.”
 3. Or, if the Spirit does a powerful work in your life, it can become easy to believe that it’s because of you. Somehow too much talking about it destroys our faith life. Why? You secretly begin to enjoy the power you have as people respect you more. The Spirit quietly withdraws his power. Jesus was protecting the disciples’ faith life by telling them to be quiet.
 4. We pray for you for a work of the Spirit in your life. A miracle of love—something beyond all of us. Words quench that.
 5. Strongly encourage you to share what you are learning with someone once a week.
 6. Consider the early church. In the first 250 years it went from 120 people to 1 million. One-third of the Roman empire called Jesus as Lord. One of the last pagan Roman

emperors, Justinian, died in the battlefield, saying, “The Galilean has conquered.” Where did that power come from? The Spirit, and the love Jesus showed. Jesus said, “The world’s going to know who I am by how you love one another”(see John 17).

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1. George Viereck, “What Life Means to Einstein,” *Saturday Evening Post* (Oct. 26, 1929), 117.
 2. D. James Kennedy, *Truths that Transform* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1974), 60.
 3. Larry Crabb, *Finding God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 101.



The Jesus Pledge

We pledge our lives to Jesus and the gospel. We want the gospel not to be just part of our lives or something that makes us feel good, but to be the very center, controlling everything. We want only the knowledge of the love of God. We want to know Christ.

We want no desire, idol, or sinful way of dealing with hurt to control any part of our lives no matter how small. We put away from ourselves the love of money, power, comfort, and success. We count everything rubbish.

We bind ourselves to Christ as bondservants for life. We want no master other than Christ. We purpose to own nothing. We surrender to Jesus our families, our friends, our ministries, our ideas, our possessions, and our future.

We commit ourselves to total submission to one another and a willingness to learn from all kinds of Christians. We commit ourselves to speak only God's words, not our own. We commit ourselves to speak the truth in love to one another.

We want to be lovers of people. We want to know how to lay down our lives for others, especially those closest to us, and we purpose to do that, as God gives us grace.

We understand that this will mean suffering in our lives, as we partake in the sufferings of Christ. But we always want to be dying so that we can always be living in Christ.

(Sign)

Homework

Each week you will get a sheet for your devotions. You are expected to spend a half hour on each day for six days for a total of three hours. If you already have devotions this will take no extra time. Usually the devotions will look back at the previous lesson, but occasionally they will look forward to the next lesson. If you don't have space, use extra pages in a notebook or journal.

If you have a very tight schedule and pour yourself into one answer and find that the half hour is gone and you've left the sheet incomplete, don't worry about it. These sheets are for you. Your trainer/group leader/counselor will only make comments on them. Our goal is for you to become like Jesus. Our goal is not for you to finish your homework.



Day One

1. Read again these passages that were read during the lecture. Which passage most stands out to you? Why?
 - a. Philippians 1:29-30; 3:10
 - b. Hebrews 5:8
 - c. Galatians 2:20
 - d. Romans 8:15-17
 - e. Colossians 1:24
 - f. 2 Corinthians 1:5-7; 4:10-12

2. What are some of the thoughts that come to your mind as you contemplate “becoming like him in his death”?



Day Two

1. As the Spirit leads you, read or study some of these passages.
 - a. Pharisees' relational patterns:
 - “But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, ‘Why are you reasoning in your hearts?’” (Luke 5:22, NASB).
 - “Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself...” (Luke 7:39, NASB).
 - “When the Pharisee saw it, he was surprised that He had not first ceremonially washed before the meal” (Luke 11:38, NASB).
 - “... when He went into the house of one of the leaders of the Pharisees on the Sabbath to eat bread, they were watching Him closely” (Luke 14:1, NASB).
 - b. Disciples' relational patterns:
 - Peter in Mark 8:27-33.
 - Thomas in John 11:1-11.
 - Disciples in John 16.
 - Philip in John 14:1-15.
 - James and John in Matthew 20:20-28.
2. Who are you more like, the Pharisees or Disciples?
3. In what ways might you be tempted to slip into pharisaical patterns of dishonesty in the course?



Day Three

1. Study the importance of silence in the face of miracles:
 - “. . . He was not permitting the demons to speak. . . ” (Mark 1:34, NASB).
 - “...and He said to him, ‘See that you say nothing to anyone’” (Mark 1:44, NASB).
 - “. . . And He gave them strict orders that no one should know about this. . . ” (Mark 5:43, NASB).
 - “And He gave them orders not to tell anyone; but the more He ordered them, the more widely they continued to proclaim it” (Mark 7:36, NASB).
 - “And He sent him to his home, saying, ‘Do not even enter the village’” (Mark 8:26, NASB).
2. What can happen to wonders of God if they are talked about too quickly? Have you ever experienced that in your life?



Day Four

Looking forward to Chapter 2: Cherishing, answer the following questions:

1. Read Luke 7:11-17 several times.
2. How does Jesus cherish this woman?
3. Who is he more concentrated on, the woman or her son?
4. Can you see four or five distinct ways that Jesus loved this woman?
5. Do you see any kind of movement or pattern to his love of her? What do you see?



Day Five

1. Read Psalm 139. Another generation of interpreters have focused on this psalm as showing God's omnipotence (God knows everything) and omnipresence (God is everywhere). It does show that. But mainly it describes how God cherishes us. It is probably one of the most beautiful love poems ever written.
2. How do you see God cherishing you in this psalm?
3. What are some of the images the psalmist uses to describe God's cherishing us?



Day Six

1. Read Ephesians 5:22-33. In 5:29, Paul actually uses the word cherish.
2. Why does Paul command husbands in particular to cherish their wives?
3. What is the husband's model or image for cherishing?
4. Are there other images that come to mind when you think of what cherishing is?
5. Write a free-flowing, non-precise definition of cherishing.