

CALVARY CHAPEL COSTA MESA

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

“Christ’s Love Flows Uphill” Philippians 1:8-11

Pastor Wayne Taylor

MAIN IDEA

In Philippians 1, Paul says he longs for the Philippian believers with the same affection of Jesus, and he prays that their love may grow. The Holy Spirit wants to transform the way we love by gently taking us into the areas of our hearts where we are motivated by the hurting of past wounds and, as Pastor Wayne called them, the “weeds” of selfishness and pride. When we experience external trials and even the pain of seeing our own sin, the Holy Spirit is loving us closely, teaching us our need for Jesus and training us to receive His love and grace. When we continue to believe God’s unconditional love and understand how it meets us in our daily lives, our love can then overflow into the lives of others.

SCRIPTURAL INSIGHT

The *affection* Paul had for this church was something he tangibly felt. The word for *affection* in the original, σπλάγχνοις (*splagchnois*), can sometimes be translated *entrails*, or the *organs of the body cavity*. We have become used to expressing the seat of our emotions as, *in our heart*. Paul felt his love in a physical way, i.e. in his innermost self. But what is interesting is that this kind of endearment is branded and associated by Paul with the Lord. He says, “How greatly I long for you all with *the affection of Jesus Christ*.” There is no higher form of love and affection than that which Jesus has given. This is what Paul prayed for the Philippians, that they would cultivate and grow in this kind of love (*agapē*).

READ & DISCUSS & KEY PASSAGE

Read out loud together Mark 2:1-12 and discuss how this passage can bring us clarity in our mission to help others remove obstacles in their pursuit of God.

Philippians 1:9a “And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more.”

The Philippian church was comprised of all sorts of people from all sorts of backgrounds. In Acts 16, we learn a little bit about the Philippian church. *What do you remember about some of the people who believed?* They came from drastically different places, socioeconomic statuses, experiences etc. *What makes it difficult to love people who are different than you are?* Paul prayed that their love would be sincere, or pure when “tested by the sun’s rays.” *What does it look like to love others “insincerely”?* *What are some characteristics of God’s love, the truly sincerest love of all?*

“We need Jesus more than we think.” —Pastor Wayne

Pastor Wayne told his own life story and gave us a brief glimpse into how his childhood trained him to be wary of trusting others. He explained how a fight with

his wife was a mercy-filled trial that unearthed the selfishness and impatience in his heart. It is easy to believe God loves us when we feel good about ourselves and like we've done the right things. *What makes it difficult to accept God's love when our sin is unearthed? When we come face to face with those "weeds" of selfishness, pride, anger, false-humility, envy etc.?*

"Trials and pressures help us receive Jesus' love." —Pastor Wayne

This is a great paradox of the Kingdom! *How can this be true? Can you think of any times in Scripture when we see people experiencing God's love via trials?*

PRAYER & TESTIMONY

Perhaps split into pairs or smaller groups and spend some time praying for each other's trials.

SPIRITUAL APPLICATION & DISCIPLINE

Christ's Love Flows Uphill

Like a tree taking in water, Pastor Wayne also says "Christ's Love Flows Uphill." This reminds me of Psalm 1, how we are like trees, "planted by the rivers of water" as we walk with God. Throughout the history of the Church, believers have used the Psalms to meditate on the nature of God and his love, often connecting to the rich metaphors and pictures the Psalmists use. This week, open to Psalm 1 and spend time imagining what it would be like to be a tree planted by a river. Imagine the leaves, the sound of the water, the smells of grass and bark. *What could it mean to connect the water to Jesus' love? What does this say about Jesus? About you? About your weaknesses? What does it mean to be a tree?* Talk to God about these things.

RESOURCE

Often, our own fears interfere with loving others well. God wants to grow love in our hearts as his perfect love casts out fear, so we can be his hands and feet to a hurting world. In his encouraging collection of stories, Bob Goff shows us what it might look like to walk in our completeness (Col. 2:9-10) and love others boldly.

Everybody, Always: Becoming Love in a World Full of Setbacks and Difficult People. Bob Goff. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2018.



Community Group Discussion Guide

Based on Pastor Wayne Taylor's message on September 31, 2018

Watch Again: <https://cccm.com/teaching/topical/video/christs-love-flows-uphill/>