

How To Love Well

“Living Large”, part 30, Insights from Acts 23:1-11
Pastor Bob Johnson, May 12th, 2024

Examples of good intentions:

v1-5

When good intentions are not good enough:

- 1. Speaking truth without ...**
(Ephesians 4:15-16)
- 2. Practicing mercy without ...**
(Hebrews 12:11, 2 Thessalonians 3:10-11)
- 3. Confronting without ...**
(Matthew 18:15-20)
- 4. Seeking change of behavior without ...**
(John 15:5, Philippians 2:13, Romans 7:21-25)

Paul’s appeal to a divided crowd:

v6-10

God’s appeal to a disappointed Paul:

v11

How can we keep going and loving ?

- 1. R_____ on the Holy Spirit**
(Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 1:7,13)
- 2. R_____ our calling**
(Acts 9:15-16, 2 Timothy 3:12)
- 3. R_____ love is an action**
(1 John 4:12-13, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

**For a free audio or video of this message go to GPC.SD,
or follow us on Facebook or Youtube.**

This Week's Discussion Guide

Welcome to our sixth week of our 12 week small group season this Spring. Each week we read and reflect on various Bible passages and discuss ways we can apply what we reflect on to our daily lives. This week's discussion is based on our current Sunday series at GPC called, "Living Large". In this Spring series, we are slowly unpacking the Book of Acts.

It is our prayer at GPC for our Sundays and small groups to provide the encouragement we all need to support each other as we desire to grow closer to God and build friendships as part of our vision at GPC to raise up committed Christ followers in a healthy church community.

Getting Started:

Each week, we typically start out with a few lighter questions to get us warmed up :).

In honor of Mother's day, what is something positive that you can say about your mom?

What is a character quality or practice you recognize in your mom that you would like to practice in your life?

One of the principles from last Sunday was the importance of establishing appropriate boundaries / limits in expressing mercy to others. We ought not to do something simply to feel better or help someone else feel better in the moment.

Can you think of a time where the loving thing was not to do what someone asked you to do for them?

It is tempting to seek behavioral change without heart change.

Can you think of a time when you did or didn't do something that revealed a heart issue that needed attention?

Regarding accepting God's calling on our lives, what is currently part of your calling in this season of your life that requires you to seek God's strength, sensitivity and guidance?

Reviewing & Reflecting on Sunday's Passage:

From reflecting on Acts 23:1-11 this past Sunday, was there a particular thought or verse that stood out to you, encouraged you, challenged you or raised a question for you?

Digging Deeper:

1. Related to how 'good intentions are not good enough' it is important to avoid doing the right things the wrong way.

Lets read 1 Samuel 25:2-35. In this story about David, Nabal, and Abigail, we read how some responded in the right way and some in the wrong way.

Let's share what we observe about these three.

Like Abigail did with David, can you think of a time when someone addressed a potentially difficult topic with you and handled it the right way?

Have you ever initiated a conversation with someone about the right topic but approached it the wrong way? If you had to do the conversation over again, what would you do differently?

2. Oftentimes, God uses people in our lives to speak truth and help us reconcile our relationships with both Him and others. After David committed adultery with Bathsheba and then murdered her husband to cover it up, God sent Nathan the prophet to confront him.

Let's read 2 Samuel 12:1-13. What can we learn from Nathan in his approach with David?

Is there someone you know whom you allow to speak sensitive truth into your life? Have you ever played the role of Nathan in someone's life? What was that experience like?

3. Last Sunday, when Paul was disappointed with how things were unfolding, God encouraged him to keep on going and loving. Let's re-read Acts 23:11.

How do the following verses encourage us to keep going when we are feeling like slowing down or quitting altogether?

1 Corinthians 15:58

2 Timothy 4:6-8

James 5:10-11

Galatians 6:7-10

Which of these verses are most helpful for you to keep moving forward faithfully? Why?

4. What helped Paul continue to remain faithful when his feelings were up and down was to remember the calling he received from God as described in Acts 9:15-16.

Regarding our calling God has given to us, let's read the following passages and highlight what God is calling us to do and why courage and humility is needed to put what God says into action.

Matthew 5:21-24

Matthew 5:44-45

Hebrews 3:13

1 Timothy 6:18-19

Which of these verses is the best reminder for you that you can make a positive difference in our broken world?

Praying Together:

One of the blessings of being in a small group is being prayed for. Is there anything that came up from this week's sermon or discussion that you would like prayer for?

Is there anything else that you would like to express prayer for?