



LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

“UNITE: Unite With Christ”

Ps. James Lowe - Feb. 1, 2015

WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. *No right or wrong answers.*

- In high school were you part of the "popular" crowd? What kind of people did you hang out with?
- Can you remember a time when someone was especially gracious with you even though you didn't deserve it? Briefly describe it.
- How do you feel when someone consistently finds fault with you or with what you do?

WORD (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at <http://www.bethelworld.org>

2 Cor 5:17-21 ESV *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

God has united us with him through Jesus Christ. By being united with Christ, we have access to the greatest spiritual benefits: forgiveness of sins, hope of a resurrected body, immortality, the promise of the renewing of our minds, and much more. Not only do we have access to invaluable, eternal benefits, we also have responsibilities. One major responsibility is to serve as his ambassadors on earth.

To be a good ambassador or representative of Christ, we must know him. We must grow in our ability to answer the following questions, if we want to emulate him by the help of his Spirit.

1. What does God feel about people?
2. What is God's will toward people?
3. How does God deal with people?

John 8:1-11 ESV *(B)ut Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."*

Here are some answers to the three questions we asked above based on the text we just read.

1. Jesus was regularly around people who were not living right and were not in relationship with God. He cared about people even though their sins were offensive to him. His love for them was greater than their offenses. He wanted to be around people because he wanted to bring them back into right relationship with God. People came to him because he was around them and they knew he cared.
2. Jesus was always focused on doing God's will in the way he interacted with people. He didn't get pulled into various controversies and entrapments. He didn't attempt to speak to every issue. Instead, he discerned his Father's will and used wisdom in what he spoke to, what he said, and how he said it. He relied upon the Father in all things through the Holy Spirit.
3. Jesus dealt graciously and mercifully with people. It was only the stubborn, self-righteous religious people who were hindering people from being reconciled to God that Jesus dealt with so critically. He desires to condemn no one, but to offer each one forgiveness, reconciliation, and help for transformation. He was consistently attractational in the way he related to people.

Like Jesus we are to care about those not living right and not in relationship with God. Like Jesus we need to be led by the Spirit in how we interact with people, and not simply react to them or follow our own impulses and thoughts. Like Jesus we are to deal graciously and mercifully with people, no matter what their lifestyle is.

PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related topic for discussion.

- How can you be an agent of reconciliation with people around you in your life?
- How can you be relationally attractive to people who are not right with God without imitating sinful aspects in their lives?
- For whom do you feel a special burden to be used by God to try to reconcile them to God?

PRAYER (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Pray that God will give you a fresh revelation of how much you have been forgiven, so that you might grow in mercy toward others.
- Pray that God will give you a strategy on reaching out to people with the Gospel.
- Pray that God will guide you with his Holy Spirit on how to relate to people.