

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

Loving Others Well... Regardless

1 John 4:7 - 21

Definition: Loving well, often, and even when it hurts, is easier said than done, but we have the ultimate example and source in and through God.

*Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. **1 John 4:7** || No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us. **1 John 4:12** || And He has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister. **1 John 4:21***

Segment Questions:

- 1 John 4:7 tells us to love one another and gives us the source of love. How would you explain to a non-believer that “love comes from God” or that “God lives in us?”
- In Jesus’s journey on earth, identify examples of defining moments that He loved despite the circumstances.
- “Love is the most important thing in our lives, a passion for which we need to fight or die for” (*Drew Ackerman*). Share specific moments, experiences or times in your life when it was really tough to choose love, but you did.
- In contrast, when was a time that it was very difficult to choose love, and you didn’t . . . how did that end and what did you learn from it?

Action Questions:

- What is the difference between a home and/or business with and without love? Explain any experiences you have had with or without it.
- This is the second Men’s Life Lesson in a row about love. Does “loving others well . . . regardless” challenge or motivate you to take our discussion and apply it? If so, in what part of your life will you do so?
- Do you know someone in your life that you need to discuss this lesson and “loving others well . . . regardless” with? If so, who (so your group can pray for you and hold you accountable to do so)?

Loving Others Well... Regardless

I grew up in a home with always loving parents who taught us to “love others well . . . regardless”.

Both of their families were driven out of Nazi Germany by Hitler’s regime, both in abrupt, fearful, time sensitive circumstances (my Dad’s family was given 24 hours, my Mom’s family was given seven days). They had to say goodbye to family, two successful businesses and friends.

When I would ask my Dad about the anger, disappointment and fear factor that I assumed was present, my Dad would always recite what his Dad (my grandfather) would say . . . we need to learn to “love others well . . . regardless”.

My parents ended up meeting in San Francisco, came to IU where my Dad taught for over 60 years. Throughout the years, my parents modeled, regardless of the circumstances, loving well. They listened well, did not judge, met people where they were in life, gave out grace and were proud, comfortable and confident in who they were.

Ironically, my parents demonstrated Christ-like love without being Christians . . . a real life sermon lived out every day. Thankfully, both accepted and embraced their faith very late in their lives. I have often thought if my parents could “love others well . . . regardless” without Jesus, what excuse do I/we have not to do so with Jesus.

1 John 4:7 – 4:21

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

¹³ This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. ¹⁷ This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. ²¹ And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.