

ULC Sermon Study Resource
Sojourn // The Path of Community
Pastor Marcus
March 26, 2023

Prayer: Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

Icebreaker: What are some communities that you identify yourself with?

Readings: 1 Peter 4:7-19

Outline:

- I. Love Each Other
 - a. The most important thing for the Church to do in light of the return of Jesus is love each other. It is so essential to the life of the Church because it covers over sin.
 - b. Love is our present because it points to our past and our future. In our past, it points to the creation and how God is so full of love that he creates things so that they can share in that love. In our future, scripture states that love will endure forever.
 - c. When we love each other we are witnessing to God's action in the past and the reality he has in store for the future.
Q: In what ways can we better love one another to reflect God's love into the world? Where in our lives is there room for improvement?
- II. Glorify God
 - a. Whatever gifts you have, use it, not for yourself, but as a steward of grace to serve the wider community. When we commit to loving in this way, everything, God is glorified through Jesus Christ.
 - b. God is glorified by simple acts of Christian love. It is through the monotonous, mundane love of the Church, using everything it has for one another, that God is most glorified.
Q: How can each of our specific gifts be used to love others? In what ways are we best equipped to serve?
- III. Suffer with Jesus
 - a. Peter calls us to rejoice in suffering because our suffering is to share in Christ's suffering. When we suffer, Jesus is near. We can be confident in this because Jesus came and revealed himself in the place of suffering.
 - b. In the face of suffering, love and serve those around you, because this brings glory to God. Entrust your life to the nail pierced hands that stretched out the heavens and now hold your salvation.
Q: How does the literal suffering of our God provide us comfort in our closeness to him?

Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) How can our love for one another help to cover the pain of the sin in the world?
- 2) Why is it harder to love people that we view as different from ourselves? How can we overcome this to better demonstrate the love of God?
- 3) In what ways can the mundane love of the church glorify God? How can we present God's love to the world?

Suggestions for further study:

- 1 John 1:7 **Q: How are we unified into one body through the blood of Jesus? How can this make us feel closer to others we see as different from us?**
- 1 Corinthians 13:13 **Q: Contemplate the ways that love is stronger than faith and hope within your life? How does love provide comfort in a unique way?**

Closing Prayer:

Father God, you have called us to be a people that seek to love and serve one another, and in so doing bring glory to You. Guide our hearts so that we do not seek to serve ourselves and seek after our own glory. Forgive us and remind us of the place where you have shown us your forgiveness. Point us back to the cross. In your holy name, Amen.