



Learning to Love Like Jesus, part 3

Richard and Sabrina Wurmbrand as examples of following Jesus

WHY LEARNING COMMUNITIES? **Circle Two Opportunity...**

To become better and better disciples of Christ TOGETHER so we can face **anything** through...

1. Deeper learning of Biblical truth
2. Stronger "iron sharpening iron" relationships

Ephesians 4:12–16 (ESV) ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Introduction

- ➔ Being utterly dependent on Christ is essential.

That comes only through confession, repentance and a lifestyle of Surrender, Listen, Obey (SLO)

"There are two kinds of Christians; those who sincerely believe in God, and those who just as sincerely believe that they believe." -- Girolamo Savonarola

Discuss

- *the prayer picture of empty garbage cans along the street as a symbol of the appearance of worship and surrender without the reality.*

- *how are you preparing for the week of prayer with fasting and Prayer Gathering?*

- ➔ God's love for the lost consuming us is the only motivation for sharing Christ that is strong enough to last. Duty or obligation not.

2 Corinthians 5:14–15 (ESV) ¹⁴For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ¹⁵and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

MOVIE CLIP: 35:40 to 49:25

1. Facing the Test, Responding to persecution

- ➔ 3 years of solitary confinement

- ➔ Prayer in intimate obedience and alignment with God, as well as a testimony.

Sabrina's response when soldiers came to arrest her: "The only weapon we have is the Bible. Let me pray and I will go with you." And then she prayed, not for deliverance, but to honor Christ, **"... may our suffering glorify You and shine through our love."**

"I have seen Christians in communist prisons with fifty pounds of chains on their feet, tortured with red hot iron pokers, in whose throats spoonfuls of salt had been forced, being kept afterward without water, starving, whipped, suffering from cold - and praying with fervor for the communists. This is humanly inexplicable! It is the love of Christ which was poured out in our hearts... It was in prison that we found the hope of salvation for the communists. It was there we developed as sense of responsibility toward them. It was in being tortured by them that we found that we learned to love them." ("Tortured for Christ," Richard Wurmbrand, pp. 75, 79)

Acts 4:23–31 (ESV)

APPLICATION:

- ✓ On a scale of 1 to 10, how much of my prayer requests are about honoring Christ rather than helping me?

2. Shift in thinking – life is all about obedient love that serves. THAT is all in all.

- ➔ Sabina never stopped “picking away at the enemy.” She proactively served at great risk instead of focusing on survival. Her “small” acts put her on the offensive, even though just a few words of encouragement risked great pain.
 - Passed on a scripture that would go throughout the camp
 - Offered continual acts of kindness and conversations encouragement
 - Responded to witness to guard mocking her

Matthew 20:25–28 (ESV)

Philippians 2:3–8 (ESV)

APPLICATION:

- ✓ On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do we view life as obedient serving in love?

3. Proactive response to suffering is serving God, not simply enduring pain.

- ➔ “Prayer,” intimate relationship that provides soul-deep satisfaction and meaning that is the essence of real, abundant life regardless of circumstances. That is THE lifeline providing us with a weapon, power, infusion of God’s Spirit and is an act of loyalty to Christ.

Philippians 3:7–11 (ESV)

APPLICATION:

- ✓ On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do we value and experience “prayer” as this kind of relationship?
- ✓ What does it take to develop this kind of relationship and prayer communication?
 - ➔ The above kind of intimate relationship connection “prayer” provides the resources to do what is not humanly possible.
 - Witnessing to those who inflicted great pain
 - Sharing Christ when they knew it would result in excruciating pain; accepting it as inevitable part of living for Christ.
- ✓ What do I/we need to do to move from protecting ourselves to exposing ourselves to danger, taking risks that can result in pain and difficulty so that Christ is seen through us?
- ✓ The Apostle Paul understood from the beginning that suffering was part of serving Christ...
 - † God’s words to Saul through Ananias:
Acts 9:16 (ESV) For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.”
 - † Paul’s words on his way to Jerusalem where he will be arrested, eventually a prisoner in Rome.
Acts 20:22–24 (ESV) ²²And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, ²³except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. ²⁴But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.
- ✓ How did Paul’s understanding of suffering and pain as inevitable and as a privilege cause him to live fully for Christ?

Colossians 1:24–2:4 (ESV)

Takeaways...



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