

Life Change from the Heart
“Step 8: Leave Your Gift at the Alter”
Matthew 5: 3-12
For the Week of December 11, 2016
New City Church of LA

GROW & SERVE GROUP GUIDE AND HOMEWORK

Open in Prayer

Worship

Read Christmas Passage like John 1:1-14 (read slowly and meditatively)

Share one word, phrase, or idea that spoke to you about the meaning of Christmas.

Sermon Reflection

“Life Change from the Heart” is a sermon series on how God changes us from the heart through the gospel. How does it work? After we surrender our life to God, we start the process of cleaning the inside of the cup, our heart. We go through an extensive process of self-examination to find self-indulgence in our heart, confession of what we find, repentance, and embrace God’s extravagant grace and pursue grace based discipleship. Then, step 8 is about starting the process of reconciling with our friends, family and neighbors.

Any questions or comments about the sermon?

Bible Study

Read Matthew 5:3-12.

1. What does it mean to be poor in spirit? What is the opposite of poor in spirit? Why is this important to the Kingdom of Heaven?
2. Compare what Jesus said about the Kingdom of God to what the world says? Share differences and similarities.
3. What is at the heart of the message?

4.

5. Apostle John said (John 1:17): "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." What does it mean to be changed by grace and truth that came through Jesus instead of the law which came through Moses?
6. Bonhoeffer in his classic, *The Cost of Discipleship*, makes a distinction between "cheap" grace and "costly" grace. According to Bonhoeffer, "Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ." Cheap grace, Bonhoeffer says, is to hear the gospel preached as follows: "Of course you have sinned, but now everything is forgiven, so you can stay as you are and enjoy the consolations of forgiveness." The main defect of such a proclamation is that it contains no demand for discipleship. In contrast to cheap grace, "costly grace confronts us as a gracious call to follow Jesus, it comes as a word of forgiveness to the broken spirit and the contrite heart. It is costly because it compels a man to submit to the yoke of Christ and follow him; it is grace because Jesus says: 'My yoke is easy and my burden is light.'"
- Do you have a tendency to rest in cheap grace without discipleship? What can you do to make sure you are engaging in discipleship the right way?
7. Give some examples from teachings of Jesus that teach us to go from living a life based on the ethics of the law (justice and fairness) to a life based on the ethics of grace (giving better than we deserve). (E.g., Matthew 5:38-48; Matthew 20:1-16; Luke 6:36, etc.)
8. How can we live out this ethics of grace in our lives?

Share how you are doing this week with one another

Pray for one another, the church, and our neighborhood