
Week 4- Commencing Sunday August 23rd

Theme: Grace Gifts and Grace Giving

The beauty of a vessel is not the vessel itself, but rather what is poured out of the vessel. A bottle is celebrated, only in as much as it provides a temporary ‘house’ for a beautiful drop of wine or a refreshing drink of water. So it is with us as God’s vessels, the grace of Jesus is given to us and it is only natural that it is then poured out to others- a constant ‘inflow’ and ‘outflow’. The invitation this week is to not grow stagnant!

Day 1- Read 1 Corinthians 12

Day 2- Read 1 Corinthians 13

Day 3- Read 1 Corinthians 14

Day 4- Read Romans 12

Day 4- Read Romans 13

“A Christian, lives not in himself, but in Christ and his neighbour through love.”

Martin Luther (The Freedom of the Christian)

Read The Following Excerpt From Miroslav Volf’s “Free of Charge”

But why shouldn’t one live “in oneself”? Isn’t that what the self is supposed to do? Not really. It’s just what the self *likes* to do. The self will lose itself if it lives in and for itself. It will seek its own benefits, and the more it seeks its own benefits the less satisfied it will become.

That’s the paradox of self-love; The more you fill the self, the more it echoes with the emptiness of unfulfillment. Living in itself and for itself, the self remains mysteriously unsatisfied and insatiable.....

The paradox of true love is exactly the opposite of the paradox of self-love: When loving truly, the self moves outside of itself to dwell with God and neighbour, and only then is it truly at home. When this happens, we have crossed over from self-centredness to genuine and fulfilling generosity.

Discussion:

1. Describe a time when you have found this to be true in your personal life. What has helped you to live like this?
2. Describe a time when you have found this to be true of The Journey as a whole (ie. when has The Journey as a church moved outside of itself to dwell with God and neighbour?) How were you involved at the time?
3. Describe how this week might be different for you, if you were able to take the next step in moving out of your *self*. What are the obstacles and challenges you would face? What hope or inspiration might spur you to take the challenge regardless?
4. What might things look like for The Journey in the coming years and months, should we learn to lose our *selves* as a whole church?