

...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembly together...but encouraging one another.
Heb 10:24-25

Share the teaching
Guard the sharing

Male Call

August 15, 2008—Atonement—Relationship Restored: Me With Me—Part VIIIb

6:00 – 6:05	Coffee & Donuts Opening Prayer
6:05 – 7:00	<p>Performance Orientation: continued from last week...¹</p> <p>1) Consequences to the Church</p> <p><i>“Religious people are the Pharisees of today. Religious people have transferred performance orientation to God. Unfortunately, all too many sermons scold and exhort for performance, building the same fearful striving, instead of preaching the simple good news of God’s grace to little children peering out of adult eyes.”</i></p> <p>a) We must hold together both:</p> <p>i) Matthew 23:25-28 (it’s not about obedience)</p> <p>ii) John 14:15 (obedience is very important)</p> <p><i>“The great tragedy is not that performance-oriented people persecute those of restful faith, but that [the restful] have not known how to minister to them to set them free. Believers must learn to love strivers to rest. Nowhere else in all society can a performance-oriented person find rest, for only after he has again and again tested love can he settle it in his heart that he is okay <u>just because he exists in Christ.</u>”</i></p> <p>b) Psalm 46:10</p> <p>c) Matthew 11:28-30</p> <p>2) God’s view of the whole mess (a few of many example Scriptures)</p> <p>a) For God so loved the world...John 3:16</p> <p>b) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)</p> <p>c) If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. (John 14:15)</p> <p>i) Not, “if you keep my commandments, I will love you”</p> <p>ii) Obedience is an outworking of our love for God and not the way we earn God’s love</p> <p>d) Challenge of Matthew 7:21-23 answered in 1Corinthians 8:3</p>

¹ Based on Sanders, ch 3. All quotes are from this chapter.

3) The way out

a) Ed's "Safe Table"

- i) Presumption of being loved regardless of what is said
- ii) Do we have a "safe table" with God?

b) Get the motivation right

- i) Jesus did not obey his Father to become his Son; he obeyed because his is his Son.

"Christian love ought to be opposite to performance-oriented behavior. The Word-become-flesh is love given unconditionally, unvaried by the good and bad behavior of the other. Christian love is born out of the unfailing heart of Christ in us for the other. Rebuke may be the action love requires. Or tenderness. Or withdrawal. We are governed not by insecurity but by the flow of Christ's love in wisdom. Unfortunately...performance orientation has been built in. The Holy Spirit must find ways to pour love out from the center of that tangled bramble bush we have become."

"It is not that we should give up trying to live for Christ. What needs to happen is the death of the old motives and birth of the new. But, until our unbelieving heart comes in truth to apprehend that fact, we will keep on keeping on. We may, finally having died to performance, return to do exactly the same works for the Lord in identical words and ways, but what flows through us will now be Jesus' love, not our flesh, and others will quickly read and take note."

"In bringing performance to death we are not saying stop serving and doing, but to die to the wrong hidden intent of the heart."

c) Romans 12:1-3

"Behavior will follow as an outcome of [God's] love in us. But success or failure in behavior is not a mark of our righteousness; Jesus is."

- 1) Help each other see the performance orientation in ourselves and the performance oriented structures in our lives.
 - a. Performance-oriented structures carry a reward system within them.
 - b. We must learn to truly *hate* the sin and also realize that we can't really hate it enough or stop it by our own willpower.
- 2) Pray in repentance and move away from the performance-oriented structures in our lives (see point 6, below)

4) Table Exercise

a) NBA Video—Respect

b) Baseball Cards—Our Stats

c) Questions to ponder:

- i) Where do you look to feel respected?
 - (1) What are your important stats?

	<p>ii) Do you see yourself in relationship with God as: (1) As employee who must perform; or (2) As a child loved unconditionally?</p> <p>iii) Where do you see areas of performance orientation in your life?</p> <p>iv) How has your performance orientation driven your life?</p> <p>v) How might your life be different if you were motivated by God's love rather than trying to earn God's love?</p> <p>5) Pray together to God:</p> <p>a) To show us our performance-oriented ways</p> <p>b) Confess that we have believed the lies</p> <p>c) Repent of our sin in believing in the lies</p> <p>d) Ask for God's forgiveness for our sin and that we may forgive those who have reinforced our performance-based thinking (even if we don't remember specific events)</p> <p>e) Ask for continued transformation (this is the journey!!!)</p> <p>i) To show us our performance-oriented ways</p> <p>ii) To accept his unconditional love</p> <p>iii) Confess that we have believed the lies</p> <p>iv) Repent of our sin in believing in the lies</p> <p>v) Ask for God's forgiveness for our sin and that we may forgive those who have reinforced our performance-based thinking (even if we don't remember specific events)</p>
7:00	<p>Closing Prayer</p> <p>If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">--Jesus (Luke 9:23)</p> <p>Every morning I must say again to myself, today I start.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">--St. Anthony of the Desert²</p>

Further reading:

- *The Bible*
- Anderson, Neil T. *Victory Over The Darkness*. Regal Books. 2000.
- Benner, David G. *Surrender to Love*. IVP Books. 2003.
- _____ *The Gift of Being Yourself*. Eagle Publishing. 2004.
- _____ *Desiring God's Will*. IVP Books. 2005.
- Burrows, Ruth. *Guidelines for Mystical Prayer*. Burns & Oates. 2007.
- Chambers, O. *My Utmost for His Highest: Selections for the Year*. Discovery House Publishers. 1993, c1935
- Dubay, Thomas. *The Fire Within*. Ignatius Press. 1989.
- Eggerichs, Emerson. *Love and Respect*. Thomas Nelson. 2004.

² Quoted in Benner, *Surrender to Love*. 75.

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- Neuhaus, Richard John. *Death on a Friday Afternoon*. Basic Books. 2000.
 - Peterson, Eugene. *The Way of Jesus: a conversation on the ways that Jesus is the way*. Eerdmans. 2007.
 - Sandford, John & Paula. *The Transformation of the Inner Man*. Victory House. 1982.
 - Wakefield, James L. *Sacred Listening: Discovering the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola*. Baker Books, 2006.