

Gospel-Centered Discipling Session 2
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God's Immeasurable Love

For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and 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.

(2 Cor. 5:14-15)

1. The root of every true obedience: love for God, love for our neighbor.
 - a. Matthew 22:37-40: And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. *On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.*"
2. The root of every disobedience: idolatry and unbelief are born out of lovelessness.
 - a. Every false god we serve has the power to entrap only because we don't love him as we should.
 - b. Every sin against a neighbor only entices because we don't love God nor those who have been made in his image.
 - c. 1 John 4:20-21; 1 John 4:18.
3. Commanding ourselves or others to love more is futile. The threatenings of the Law, guilt and condemnation *never* motivate love nor obedience.
4. Our love is responsive in nature.
 - a. "We love because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19).
 - b. Love is the first cause of all the graces we desire, it "warms the heart, and sweetly and powerfully influences our affections to delight in, and to walk in love with such an exceedingly gracious and merciful God."
(William Romaine, *The Life, Walk and Triumph of Faith*, p. 117).
5. Only God's love for us can engender obedience. Our counselees need to look more intently at God's love for them than at their sin or failures.

- a. God's *hesed* or "steadfast love" is spoken of 123 times in the Psalms alone.
 - i. Love, strength and steadfastness.
 - ii. God's love is utterly determined.
 - iii. More than a contractual agreement.
 - iv. Hosea 2:19-20.
 - b. Exodus 34:6-7.
 - c. Psalm 103:8-14.
 - i. High as the heavens above the earth.
 - ii. As far as the east is from the west.
 - iii. We are dust.
 - d. Zephaniah 3:17, "The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing."
 - e. Hope in his steadfast love, Psalm 147:11.
 - f. He delights in his steadfast love, Micah 7:18; Jeremiah 9:23-24.
 - g. The earth is full of his steadfast love, Psalm 33:5.
 - h. God's love has been poured into our hearts, Romans 5:5.
 - i. When you sin, remember his love, Psalm 25:6-7.
 - j. When you're in a trial, remember his love, Psalm 31:7-8, 21; 94:18-19.
 - k. Psalm 36:7; 59:16-17; Isaiah 40:11.
6. God's love never fails, 1 Corinthians 13.
7. We're commanded to know and believe in his love for us, 1 John 4:14,16, "And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world...So we have come to *know* and to *believe* the love that God has for us." How does the love of Christ control us? What does the gospel have to do with our obedience?
8. Our enemy wants us to focus on ourselves, our sins, our idols, our desires. Instead God lavishes his love upon us over and over again for only a stronger love, a new affection can wean our hearts from our idols and make us truly obedient. "God is love" (1 John 4:8, 16).

