

## Huddle

*Love, Serve, Pursue - Pursue God,  
March 10, 2013*

**Describe a time when you pursued something or someone important to you. How did it turn out?**

*Over the last five weeks, we have discussed what it means to love and serve God and people. But to love and serve consistently hinges on the third component of our vision statement – pursue. Let's look back and see them connect.*

*We demonstrate our love to God:*

- 1. By keeping His commandments*
- 2. By our care for other believers*
- 3. By our loving God more, and the world less*

*Agape love is a deliberate intentional love involving our thoughts, words, and actions. This love motivates us to love other believers, our neighbors and even our enemies.*

*To serve God as a bond-servant, one who willingly gives up his rights, we surrender absolutely to God's Lordship. We are motivated to serve God and people as a natural response to a loving God who have Himself for us. We deeply desire to bring honor and glory to Him in everything.*

*Hebrews 12:1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. NKJV*

*Aren't you glad Jesus laid aside everything to pursue you? He gave it all so you could know Him intimately in return.*

**What has become a weight or sin which ensnares you and keeps you from pursuing Jesus more intimately?**

**Jesus pursued us by giving it all on the cross so our response to the cross is our foremost way to pursue God daily.**

*Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone desires to be My disciple, let him deny himself [disregard, lose sight of, and forget himself and his own interests] and take up his cross and follow Me [cleave steadfastly to Me, conform wholly to My example in living and, if need be, in dying, also]. AMP*

**How do you live out "take up his cross and follow me"?**

*There is no compromise at the cross. The cross of Christ demands change! "Christ is to us just what the cross is. All that Christ was in heaven or on earth was put into what He did there... You do not understand Christ till you understand His cross." P.T. Forsyth*

*'No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them' - John 6:44 Pursuing God is responding to what the Father initiates because of His incredible love for you.*

*Jesus modeled servant evangelism: deeds of love + words of love + adequate time. Pastor challenged - saved people, serve people – it is normal for us to serve people outside the church.*

**How is your commitment to love and serve evolving?**

*When we understand the depths of God's pursuit of us, it deeply impacts us. God is like the prodigal's father in Luke 15:20 "When he was still a long way off, his father saw him. His heart pounding, he ran out, embraced him, and kissed him."*

*God illustrated His loving pursuit when He called Hosea to pursue a radically different kind of love, one based on a conscious choice to be committed to someone else for her benefit, regardless of her response to that gift (Hosea 3:1–3). That's how committed God is to us. God knows us intimately and even when we neglect Him, He pursues us.*

**How does God's unfailing love and pursuit impact you?**

## Let's Get Real!

*Pursuing Him through the cross means:*

- Dying daily to our own interests and desires*
- Wrapping our past, present, and future in Him*
- Understanding His grace - His divine influence on our heart, and its reflection in our lives of gratitude*

**Is Jesus asking any more from us than we would require from our intimate relationship with a spouse? Explain.**

**We pursue God through our worship as our faith in Christ becomes the central component of our lives.** C.S. Lewis said "it is in the process of being worshipped that God communicates His presence to men."

**Pursuing God is to take on His nature to be like Him.** Many people seek God for other reasons and largely experience failure because they are wanting God to conform to their own image instead of conforming to His.

**What change will God require of you to be in His Presence and take on His nature?**

*Jeremiah 31:3 The Lord has appeared of old to me, saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you. NKJV*

**We pursue God as we respond to His love and He draws us to Himself!** God always acts first by loving and pursuing us.

## Walk it Out

**How will you respond to God's unfailing pursuit of intimacy with you?**