



Reflections on the Cross

Small groups Spring 2009

Reflection

Last week we talked about the fact that our deeds of the flesh have been put to death. This is death that leads to triumph. To the world, this is foolishness. But it is the power of God to us being saved. (*1 Corinthians 1:18*)

The Cross leads to a new friendship

This week we are going to talk about how the cross of Christ shows us that we are the friend of Christ. The cross also shows us how we ought to lay down our life for the brethren. This again shows the vertical and horizontal affect of the cross.

How a friend shows His love

Describe the attributes of your best friend without mentioning their name. What elements of the relationship would lead you to conclude it is a serious friendship versus a casual relationship?

To think that God could be our friend may seem unimaginable to many. But for us, the children of God, it is a fact. Read [John 15:12-15](#).

In this passage it says that God's friendship with us involves sacrificial love (the cross). Where in this passage is this element spoken of?

In [verse 15](#), we see the benefit of being a friend of Jesus: We know what our Master is doing! Have you ever felt like the Lord was befriending you as the Holy Spirit was leading you to do something or as you read the Word?

Now, how do we reciprocate the friendship? Read [verse 14](#). How can we be Jesus' friend?

[1 John 4:19](#) says, "We love because He first loved us." Compare this with [John 15:12](#). How is Jesus our forerunner here?

Read **John 10:11-15**. What attributes of God's friendship with us do you see here?

How then shall we live?

We are going to spend the rest of the time discussing what it means to lay down our lives for our friends. Let's consider the life of Jesus and how He did this, not only at the cross, but before the cross as well.

Here are some probing questions...

What does "laying down our life for a friend" mean for us?

How can we give of our time? What if we have no time?

Are there some examples in the Bible, Old or New Testament where you can think of men or women of God who lived this out?

Tell of a time when you "laid down your life" for a friend or tell of a time when a friend "laid down their life" for you.

Prayer

See if there are any prayer requests from everyone in your group. Pray for each request.