



KINGDOM CULTURE VIDEO TRANSCRIPT WEEK FOUR

Teaching Video Transcript | Week 4: Kingdom Culture Loves Lavishly

Have you ever cared for and loved in such a generous way that you would describe it as lavish?

"In the days leading up to 9-11, fighting in Afghanistan between local groups and then the Taliban resulted in thousands of refugees pouring down into neighboring Peshawar, Pakistan. There they were squashed into tents and mud hovels in refugee camps in intense heat and poor sanitation. J. Dudley Woodberry and his wife Roberta were working in the refugee camps at the time. Woodbury describes what happened in the camps:

Conditions at one camp were harsher than at the others; so Roberta and her class took school supplies to the students so they had more than just blank slates with chalk. Another group of eight workers imported thousands of sandals for the children who ran around with bare feet on the rough parched ground. But they decided that they would also wash their feet as Jesus had. My daughter-in-law joined the group. For a week they washed every foot with antibacterial soap, anointed with oil, and silently prayed for the child. Then they gave each of them new sandals, a quilt, and a shawl, plus a small bag of flour for every family. At first the sores, pus, pink eye, and dirt were revolting. But then our daughter-in-law felt a deep love as she silently prayed, "Dear Father, this little girl looks like she does not have anyone to care for her. Let my touch feel to her as if you are touching her. May she remember how you touched her this day, and may she seek after you hereafter. Thank you for those who seek you will find you." Many children looked up and shyly smiled.

Sometime later a teacher in one of the tents used for a refugee school asked her class, "Who are the best Muslims?" A girl raised her hand and replied, "the kafirs" (a term meaning unbelievers that is often used by Muslims for Christians). After the teacher recovered from her shock, she asked, "Why?" The young girl replied, "The Muslim fighters killed my father, but the kafirs washed my feet."¹

To her teacher what this girl said was shocking because Christians were not looked upon favorably, but when you understood she had been the victim of violent hatred from her own people and been loved lavishly by a Christian you see the power of being loved like God loves us.

The Bible tells us

6 ...at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 10 For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! (Romans 5:6-10, NIV) God loves us lavishly because even though we were his sinful enemies he reconciled us to him through Jesus' death. God accepts us and loves us before we believed and before we are lovable. He has compassion on us because he recognizes that we are like sheep without a shepherd and we need to be rounded up by his love. This kind of lavish love is the what the culture of the kingdom of God is like.

Once when Jesus was being tested by an expert in the laws of Judaism the expert asked what he must do to inherit eternal life and Jesus turned the question back on him asking what the law said. The expert then quoted the great commandment which says to love God with all that you are and the second great commandment to love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus replies great then do it, but the expert wants to toy with Jesus and he asked who is my neighbor. In response, Jesus tells the Parable of the Good Samaritan. When he concluded he asks the expert who was the neighbor to the injured man in the story. The expert replied the one who gave him mercy and helped him. Then Jesus looks at the expert and says: "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:37b, NIV)

Jesus tells a startling story of loving lavishly and no one expected the ending because the hero is a person of a hated, different race. And the hero loved lavishly. And Jesus' response is go and love others the same way, even people who are of different races. The disciples got this message because when the church was born lots of people became followers of Jesus and they weren't Jewish. All of a sudden what had been

seen as a movement just for Jewish people, now was a multi-ethnic movement. All of a sudden they had to come to terms with the teaching of their Lord and Savior who loved them lavishly. He really did mean to love people who are not like them. On the day of Pentecost when the church was born we read that there were people from 17 different people groups and they all heard the message of salvation through faith in Jesus and 3,000 people became Christians that day. The body of Christ went from being an exclusive, select group of ethnically Hebrew followers of Jesus, to being a multi-cultural, inclusive movement of Christ-followers. This had to cause some stress and tension, but in the midst of this explosive numerical and spiritual growth the Holy Spirit surely reminded them of Jesus' own words when he said to them: 34 So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. 35 Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." (John 13:34-35, NLT) Jesus made loving others the primary identifying action of being his follower. And as evidenced in their writings his disciples got the message and they spread the message.

James, the half-brother of Jesus and a leader in the church in Jerusalem, understood that Jesus wasn't just his half-brother but that he was his Lord and Savior and the teacher of the royal law of the Kingdom of God and so this was how he taught Jesus' words. He said: "You will be doing the right thing if you obey the law of the Kingdom, which is found in the scripture, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself."" (James 2:8, GNB)

Because our English language only has one word for love we can over use it saying we love hot dogs in one minute and we love our mothers in the next sentence. The Greek language doesn't have that problem because it has one word for loving our friends and another for sexual love and another for unconditional love. In case you are wondering, every instance in scripture of the great commands to love God and to love neighbor use the word translated as unconditional love. If that doesn't convince of how important loving lavishly is, consider the conclusion of Jesus about the commands to love God and neighbor. He said All the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets are based on these two commandments. (Matthew 22:40, CEV) In other words, if we love God and others we are fully embracing the culture of the kingdom of God.

Valley Brook Community Church All Church Study: Video Transcript Week Four

¹Adapted from Evelyne A. Reisacher, *Joyful Witness in the Muslim World*, (Baker Academic, 2016), pgs. 112-113.

