



BELIEVE

KNOWING JESUS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

PART 3

NBC

NARRABEEN BAPTIST CHURCH

*Presenting Christ to Everyone
Presenting Everyone Mature to Christ*

JOHN 8:12

**When Jesus spoke again to the people,
he said, 'I am the light of the world.**

**Whoever follows me will
never walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.'**

WEEK ONE:
John 7:53-8:11

Before we even dive into our text, you may have noticed there is a problem. Most Bibles, after John 7:52 will include a note that says something like “The earliest manuscripts and many other ancient witnesses do not have John 7:53-8:11.”

You may be wondering what that statement means. We do not have the original copies of the manuscripts written down by any biblical author. There is no “1st Edition” of John’s Gospel sitting in a library somewhere. This is true of any ancient text – people in ancient history did not have the capacity to preserve documents like we do today. The texts themselves were usually written down on a material called papyrus, which is much more fragile than the paper we use today. For that reason, documents were copied when the original material started to decompose. Thanks to the dry, arid weather around the Near East, many of these old copies of the biblical texts have been discovered intact. The earliest of these dates back to about 125AD from John’s Gospel, which is only a few decades after the original would have been composed (this in and of itself is a remarkable feat for any ancient text, which only proves the validity that the Bible we have today is the same as what was written down originally).

This leads us back to our text in John 7:53-8:11. What that statement in our Bibles means is that of all the oldest copies we have discovered of John’s Gospel, none of them contain the passage before us. The text goes directly from John 7:52 to 8:12 (there were no verse numbers on those earliest manuscripts, FYI). Also, none of the early church writers seem to mention this passage at all either. The first time we see this passage as part of John’s Gospel is around 350AD (almost 300 years after the original would have been composed).

So immediately for Christians who believe the Bible is the perfect Word of God, this creates several problems.

First, why do you think the earliest copies of John's Gospel do not contain this passage?

Second, where do you think this passage comes from?

Third, how and why did it somehow appear in John's Gospel some 300 years later, especially when it interrupts the narrative and flow of the story?

Fourth (and this is probably the most crucial question before us), does the later inclusion of this passage, which was not original to this Gospel, mean the Bible as God's perfect Word is compromised? Can anything else in Scripture then be trusted?

Now before we all throw away our Bibles and give up on our faith (hopefully your reaction is not that dramatic!), it is probably necessary to explain a few things.

The Bible was written in a period of time when most information, stories, traditions, etc. were passed down orally. People in the ancient world had a much greater capacity for memorization than we do today. Many people were illiterate and societies transmitted their culture through word of mouth. Writing things down was a luxury for the wealthy and rare and expensive to do. To become a rabbi in Jesus' day, you would have to memorize the entire Pentateuch (first five books of the Old Testament) word for word (that's 187 chapters or 80,000 words, if you're counting). This oral tradition was normative during the time of the New Testament as well. Most scholars believe that the Gospels were not actually written down until 50AD (the earliest estimation), two decades after Jesus' death and resurrection. People wouldn't need to write any of this down because the stories of Jesus, his words and teaching, were passed down by his earliest disciples, memorized by the

next generation. If you had a time machine and traveled by to say 40AD, you would find those Christians reciting to you, word for word, the ministry of Jesus.

When it came time to compose their Gospel stories, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John included their own selection of these many stories of Jesus' life and teaching to tell their story in their own particular way to a specific audience (which explains why the Gospels have both similar and unique stories). The end of John's Gospel even tells us in John 21:25, "Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written." This means that there were other stories floating around about what Jesus taught or did that weren't included (for whatever reason) in the Gospels we have today. Most likely, this story in John 7:52-8:11 is one of those stories. An early Christian bishop named Papias mentions this story around 125AD in his writings. Other later writers also acknowledge the existence of this story and even accept it as historically accurate and God's Word.

The most likely explanation is that though not originally part of John's Gospel, this passage did happen and existed as a story told about Jesus orally, though it was not written down. At some stage (around the time the church was prayerfully discerning what New Testament books were God's Word), this story was slotted into John's Gospel – it was too authentic and beneficial to leave out. As you study this story, you will understand how this story looks and sounds just like something Jesus would do and say. With that in mind, we should be confident to read, study and preach on this passage as God's Word to us today.

Read John 7:53-8:6a.

What sticks out to you as odd in this story?

What was this woman doing?

Even though this is self-evident, what does it mean that she was “caught in adultery”?

Does she have any way to explain that they have the wrong person?

There are two glaring problems with what is happening here, which may not be obvious to us, but are very clear to Jesus.

First, where is the man this woman was caught with?
And why isn't he also brought forward?

Second, the text tells us these religious leaders were trying to “trap” and “accuse” Jesus. This must mean that they had prior knowledge of this woman's (and her partner's) sin and did nothing about it AND specifically waited outside the bedroom for the woman to be caught in the act itself.

The Jewish law has a lot to say about sexual sin.

Various cases demand different reprisals.

Deuteronomy 22:23-24 indicates in cases of sex outside of marriage that both lovers were to be stoned to death. Yet like what often happens in our time today, the man is permitted a clean getaway while the woman is shamed and punished (that's a discussion for another time). In order to bring forth this sort of punishment, precise and exact evidence had to be produced.

Two witnesses would have had to witness the couple in a sexual context: lying in the same bed, unmistakable body movements, and positive identifies. The specifics of this accusation meant these leaders had set a trap – in order to shame this woman AND accuse Jesus of mishandling the case. Further, the Jewish law clearly states that if you witness someone about to commit a sin, compassion required that you speak up and attempt to stop it and help that person turn back to obedience. Witnessing a sin and doing nothing about it was just as punishable as the sin itself.

Why are the actions of these leaders problematic?

What do they tell us about these men?

Are they really about obeying God out of love for Him?

Read John 8:6b-11.

Why do you think Jesus responded the way he did (by pausing and remaining silent)?

What do you think Jesus was writing on the ground? (hint: it probably has something to do with the situation and how the leaders respond in the end)

What sort of weight does Jesus' statement in verse 7 carry? Has there ever been a moment in your life where you condemned someone for something (directly or in your heart) all the while doing/being worthy of condemnation yourself?

Why do the leaders respond (verse 9) the way that they do?

Why do these oldest ones leave first?

What does Jesus' question to the woman in verse 10 imply not only for her, but all of us before Jesus?
(read John 3:16-17 and Romans 8:1 for clarification).

The trap these leaders were trying to set for Jesus was this – if Jesus condemned the woman to death, it would imply he is for justice but without mercy. If Jesus forgave the woman, it would imply he is for mercy with no justice. Either way, the leaders could have called Jesus out for failing to obey both aspects of the Jewish law.

How does Jesus demonstrate both justice AND mercy to this woman without compromising on either one?

Jesus says to her “Neither do I condemn you” and “Go now and leave your life of sin.” Forgiveness and repentance held in perfect harmony. As Christians, we often struggle to understand both parts of this equation. Either we are plagued with guilt and feel unforgiveable, or we think Jesus will readily forgive us without calling us to actually be transformed.

Which one of these do you struggle with the most?
How can you strike a healthy balance?

What does this passage tell us about dealing with sin in others?

We often treat sexual sin as particularly heinous. We swiftly judge or dismiss people who struggle with sexual sin (of any kind), but often could care less about sins like greed or pride or bitterness or envy. The same churches that fire pastors or leaders who go through divorce will not care if other leaders have problems with gambling or drinking.

Yet how does Jesus respond to this “grievous” sin?

What does this tell us about how we ought to respond?

**WEEK TWO:
John 8:12-30**

Read John 8:12-18.

This section, we must remember, is the continuation of the narrative beginning in John 7. There we are told Jesus has journeyed to Jerusalem in order to participate in one of the major Jewish festivals: the Feast of Tabernacles. As we have seen in previous studies, Jesus uses the cultural images and themes of his audience and says that these all point to him; they are fulfilled totally in him. The Feast of Tabernacles had several main expressions. It was a preview of the “Day of the Lord” when God would come back and provide food and water for His people. Jesus uses this imagery in chapter 7 by declaring that HE is the one who will provide streams of living water for those who believe in him. Another theme of the Feast of Tabernacles was that of light. In Zechariah 14, this Day of the Lord is mentioned as a time when God will return and there will be no more night, but God’s light will shine into the darkness. Part of the Feast of Tabernacles involved placing bowls of oil around the Court of Women in the Temple and lighting them on fire. This light, it was said, lit up the whole city of Jerusalem at night.

How does Jesus’ statement in verse 12 tie into the themes of the Feast of Tabernacles/Day of the Lord?

How is the light of Jesus different than the light of the Feast?

How do the Pharisees respond to Jesus’ comment in verse 13?

This same argument about the validity of Jesus' claims has already been discussed in chapters 5 and 7. Jewish law indicated that in order to make a solid statement of fact, more than one witness was required. Jesus previously (in chapter 5) said that he had a plethora of witnesses on his side: John the Baptist, Moses, the Father, Scripture.

Who does Jesus cite as his supporting witness in verses 14-18?

This is important because Jesus is not saying his words are true because of their inherent persuasiveness, but because of their origins. His words come directly from the one who spoke all life into being in the first place. Essentially Jesus' speech comes from the author of speech, hence not only is it valid, but we ought to pay attention.

Read John 8:19-20.

Why do you think the Jewish leaders keep failing to understand Jesus?

Jesus answers their question by basically saying people would recognize him and his Father based on family resemblance. "We look just like one another" he states. So if you're confused about who God is and what He is like, then you'll be equally confused as to who Jesus is (and vice versa).

Verse 20 mentions Jesus spoke these things in the place where the offerings were put. This place is called the Court of Women in the Temple area, a place where both men and women could come and worship the Lord and give of their offerings. It is also the place, as mentioned above, where the bowls were lit on fire during the Feast of Tabernacles, to light up the city. By Jesus making these claims here, he is saying he not only lights up a city, but the entire world, where men and women can come and receive light for their lives in him.

Read John 8:21-22.

What stern warning does Jesus utter in verse 21?

Again, the people do not understand. Here they believe Jesus is talking about his death (which, we'll see, is not untrue!). In chapter 7 Jesus says something similar and the crowd takes his to mean he's travelling to reach the Gentiles (also not entirely untrue). Either way, they are incredibly confused. So Jesus tries to shed light on their misunderstanding of him.

Read John 8:23-26.

Why can't the people grasp who Jesus really is?

In the middle of verse 24, Jesus says something quite significant, which we easily miss in our English translations. One of Jesus' favourite statements in John's Gospel is calling himself "I am." We've already seen this earlier in this chapter when he says "I AM the light of the world." The phrase "I am" is equivalent to God's Name in the Old Testament, Yahweh. When Moses asks God in Exodus 3 "Whom shall I say sent me?" God replies "Yahweh," which means "I am" or "I am who I am". It's a word that means God IS everything – He is existence itself. When Jesus uses the phrase "I am" he is stating that Jesus IS Yahweh, the one who IS, in whom is life itself. So in verse 24 Jesus literally says, "...if you do not believe that I AM, you will indeed die in your sins."

And how do the people react in verse 25?

Read John 8:27-30.

Again, the Jews fail to understand Jesus was telling them about his Father. But he sheds them in on another secret – “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM, and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me...”

What does Jesus mean when he mentions being “lifted up”?
How will that event prove he is who he says he is?

Some the crowd seem to respond positively to Jesus (verse 30). Others, we will soon see, do not. This is a major theme in John’s Gospel. The majority of people are blind and cannot understand what Jesus is talking about or who he really is. However a small number of people do seem to get it and respond by believing in him – that Jesus is not some esoteric teacher, but the I AM, Yahweh, the living water, the light of the world, the bread of life. What Jesus says is he is EVERYTHING and if that is the case, it means we must respond by surrendering our everything to him and following him. We cannot come to Jesus half-heartedly or without being transformed entirely by him.

The question this section begs is: how do you respond to Jesus? Is Jesus the light of the world to you, or just another light that perhaps lights up a small portion of your life (like the fires at the Feast)?

Do you like Jesus merely because he is persuasive or because he speaks the very words of God Himself?

Are you living today like he is life itself or are you chasing after other things to give you life?

WEEK THREE:
John 8:31-47

Read John 8:31-32.

This verse is the continuation of 8:12-30. After questioning and misunderstanding Jesus, some within his audience seemingly respond by putting “their faith in him” (8:30). Jesus then turns to this same crowd in verse 31, “To the Jews who had believed in him...”

What does he say to this group of “believers”?

What is the mark of a true disciple, according to Jesus?

What is the result of that mark?

Read John 8:33-38.

The crowd’s response is not only hostile to what Jesus said, but full of holes. How many times, can you recall, have the descendants of Abraham (the Jewish people) been slaves to someone else?

The people are (mistakenly) referring to a literal, physical sort of slavery. But what kind of slavery is Jesus referring to? What does Jesus say is the real source of their inability to be free?

We often make the mistake that “if I could only...(fill in the blank)” then I would be “happy/better/stress-free”. Jesus is saying there is a problem with this: those things, whatever they are (debt, addiction, pride, jealousy, anxiety, etc) are not the real issue. Sin is. It is only Jesus who can set us free indeed from that slave master.

Do you live in such a way that you look for Jesus for freedom?
Or do you pursue freedom in other areas of your life?
Be honest.

Why don't we trust Jesus as the one who can truly set us free?

Read John 8:39-47.

What is Jesus' basic argument about our family resemblance?

Earlier in the chapter, Jesus claimed that people would recognize him if they truly recognized God the Father. The family likeness is uncanny. Like father, like son. Using this same logic on his listeners, who does the crowd look more like (Abraham? God?)?

He goes on to say those who belong to God do what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God. (verse 47). This is a huge accusation. Two things we ought to know about who Jesus is addressing. First, these are Jewish people. They are, by all the outward signs, God's children, Abraham's descendants. They know and try and follow the Jewish law. The men in the crowd would certainly be circumcised. You can't get more into God's family than that. Secondly, Jesus is talking to people, we must remember, who just "put their faith in him."

How can Jesus make this sort of claim against Jews who, by their ancestry are "in" God's family already AND who have made some sort of declaration of faith in Jesus?

Is it possible to be in God's family, to even believe in Jesus, and yet somehow not "belong to God" as Jesus states in verse 47?

Think about it this way in our setting today. Is it possible that a person could be a lifelong church member, who knows the Bible and tries to live it out, who asserts trust in Jesus and yet NOT really belong to Jesus at all?

Jesus' logic is this: If you hold to his teaching (obey him), you will be set free. When you are set free, you belong to a new family and you look and act like that family. To put it simply: obedience, transformation and belonging. You listen to Jesus, you are changed by Jesus and you look like Jesus.

The crowd here seems to have gotten stuck at the first step. They listen, even have some sort of belief, yet something is holding them back (heritage, in this case). Most likely there are people within our church that have stopped at that first step as well. Outwardly, they appear to believe and obey, but internally have not been transformed and don't really look like Jesus at all.

So the question for us is: does Jesus' words describe you?

Which father do you look more like?

If someone looked at your actions and your heart, would they see someone who listens to, has been transformed and looks like Jesus or someone else?

If you are stuck in that process (as these people were) – what's the solution? What's your next step?

WEEK FOUR: John 8:48-59

Who is Jesus, really? This question pops up in different forms throughout John's Gospel. We must remember that John is likely writing this for his church community (the same church he addresses in 1, 2 and 3 John). From what we can piece together, there was some confusion about who Jesus really was and what it meant to follow him. John writes to bring clarity to his audience. In John 8, we are reintroduced to a familiar formula: people follow Jesus and become interested in him, but when Jesus elaborates on his identity and purpose, they become cynical, perplexed or even angry. Jesus has just made a jarring claim: people do not and cannot recognize who he is and what he is doing because they are slaves to sin and children of the devil. Their Jewish ancestry, their adherence to the Jewish law, their outward religious practices do not cover the truth that inwardly, they are far from God and are in need of saving.

With Jesus' words fresh in our heads, let's read how this goes over with the crowd.

Read John 8:48-53.

This conversation has seemingly turned into a schoolyard verbal joust. Jesus carefully and persuasively makes the point that your actions demonstrate who you look like. Like father, like son. Their actions (a desire to murder, deafness to God's Word, disregard for truth) reveal that they look more like Satan than Yahweh. Jesus says "your father is the devil" to which they basically reply, "No... you are the devil!" (good comeback, guys).

What do we know about what Jews thought of Samaritans?

By labeling Jesus a Samaritan and demon-possessed, what are they saying about their perception of Jesus' "family" of origin?

How does Jesus reply? Who does he again refer to as the one who is on his side, who confirms what he says as truth?

Again he issues a challenge to this disbelieving crowd: if you keep my word, you'll never see death. In other words, I look like my Father (who you claim to believe in), and so if you listen to me you're listening to Him, and you'll have life forever (just as we know God is eternal and holds all life in His hands).

Instead of connecting the dots (Jesus talks about eternal life, eternal life is from God, just must be sent from God), the crowd comes to a different conclusion.

What do they think Jesus said that leads them to conclude that Jesus is indeed demon-possessed?

The people, through their limited human understanding, see Jesus in limited terms (he's only a human, we know where you came from, we've met your family, etc.) and therefore are unable to grasp the offer before them, that eternal life is present right now, right in front of them.

Has this ever been the reception you've gotten from people when you've tried to share the good news about Jesus? Why do you think people often respond so negatively to something so amazing (full life without end)?

Read John 8:54-59.

What is Jesus saying about Abraham (and really the whole of the Old Testament) in relations to himself in verses 54-56?

Where does Abraham “rejoice” at the thought of seeing the “day” of Jesus?

How does the crowd respond to Jesus’ relationship to Abraham?

In verse 59, why do the people react the way they do to what Jesus said in verse 58? What would prompt such a violent reaction?

*There are 24 different times Jesus uses the Greek phrase *ego eimi* in the Gospel of John. *Ego eimi* translates simply as “I am” Even if you are unable to read Greek, you will recognize how important this phrase is in John. The most famous passages in the text contain that phrase: I am the bread of life; I am the resurrection and the life; I am the Good Shepherd, etc. But as we have explored before, these I am statements are inherently connected to the I am statement God makes of Himself in the Old Testament. The name God gives for Himself in the Old Testament is the Hebrew word *Yahweh*, which also translates as I am. So whenever Jesus uses this phrase, he is saying he and the Father are one.*

How does this information help us understand the crowd’s reaction to Jesus in verse 59?

If Jesus really is God (as his use of *ego eimi* indicates here), why do the people respond the way that they do? If God Himself is speaking to you, why would resist? Do you ever find yourself doing something similar (resisting God because it is not what you want to hear)?

What does it mean to respond to Jesus rightly so far in John’s Gospel?

WEEK FIVE: **John 9:1-12**

In the Gospel of John, Jesus just so happens to appear, speak and work against the backdrop of major Jewish cultural institutions and celebrations: weddings, ceremonial washing, the Sabbath, the Passover, etc. Continuing on from John 7, Jesus is present in Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles, a celebration of God's provision of food, water and light (in times past, present and future). In John 8:12, Jesus already declared he is the light of the world...not just the light of Jerusalem or the Jewish people (as the Tabernacles festival celebrated). He is the one who provides light to all. As the Feast of Tabernacles continues in John 9, we are presented with a "case study" of just exactly HOW Jesus brings light to people.

Read John 9:1-5.

Many people in the ancient world believed that if you suffered some sort of misfortune (whether it be physical, mental, financial, etc.), it was due to the fact that you or someone connected to you made God or the gods angry. This is clearly seen throughout the gospel stories and especially noted in the disciples' question about the origin of this man's ailment.

What, in verse 3, does Jesus say to this popular cultural belief? What is he saying about how God operates (or doesn't operate)?

The NIV translation does not do verse 3 much justice. There are no punctuation marks in the Greek text, which leaves that job up to translators to communicate how best to render the original wording into English. In the NIV verse three seems to indicate that God purposely made this man blind in order that God would display His glory (through the man's upcoming healing). Though some of us may not have a problem with that

understanding (God uses suffering to bring about good), for others it may leave a bitter taste in our mouth (that God made or allowed this to happen). Many scholars think the second part of verse 3 should be connected with verse 4 as a separate sentence, which would make the text read this way: “Neither this man nor his parents sinned. [full stop]. But so that the works of God might be displayed in his life, we must do the work of Him who sent me while it is still day.” This changes the aspect of the sentence to God causing the man’s blindness just so Jesus could heal him, to instead say that there is no easy explanation of the man’s condition, but God has sent Jesus to set things right, because God is at work.

Did you notice in verse 4, Jesus says “WE must do the works of Him who sent me...” What do you think this means?

Does this include you?
If so, what does Jesus mean?

Read John 8:6-7.

Why didn’t Jesus just heal the man directly (by speaking or some other quicker means)?

What do you think the point of the mud pie in the eye concoction is?

Have you ever experienced something like this – where you look to Jesus for something and he makes your life a bit messy or later down the track provides the answer to your prayer (but not immediately)? What do we make of Jesus operating this way?

The Pool of Siloam was Jerusalem’s source of spring water for the city. King Hezekiah had water diverted from the Gihon Spring outside of the city to provide water to the inhabitants while they

were under siege by the Assyrians (see 2 Kings 20:20 and 2 Chronicles 32). This pool also was the main source of water for the Feast of Tabernacles, which meant that the Pool of Siloam had significant historic and cultural significance as source of life and joy. The word Siloam, as the text indicates, means “sent” in the Hebrew language. Jesus is described as “sent” by God more than twenty times in John’s Gospel. In other words, the man is being told to go wash in a place called “sent” by the One who was “sent” by God. In other words, Jesus is the source of his healing, not the pool itself.

How does the man respond to this strange series of events?

Does he get upset or question Jesus or wonder why he’s not healed immediately or is forced to where this mud mask?

What can we learn from his response to Jesus’ commands?

Read John 9:8-12.

Why do you think his neighbours, people who would see him every day, seem so confused?

If only his eyes were healed (and nothing else about him changed, like his height or hair colour or number of appendages) – why couldn’t they recognize him?

What does the man’s response in verse 11 tell John’s readers (and the people Jesus interacts with in the narrative) about how everyone ought to respond to Jesus?

As we've explored in John's Gospel, there is a simple formula – you hear Jesus, believe him, and then do what he says.

Why is this so easy for this man, but so hard for almost everyone else mentioned in the narrative?

To put it another way - if a man who is blind physically has the ability to see spiritually, how come people who have perfect physical eyesight seem to be so blind spiritually?

Jesus describes this phenomenon elsewhere. In Mark 4 Jesus states that the crowds have eyes to see, but never perceive, they have ears to hear, but can't understand (quoting Isaiah 6).

How can a person who can see physical light escape the trap of living in spiritual darkness?

What about you?

Are you presently living in spiritual darkness, unable to see or hear or respond properly to God's light in your life?

What can you do about it?

**WEEK SIX:
Celebration Sunday**

Read Nehemiah 12:27-43.

What is happening in this passage?

These verses set a precedent for the family of believers – that when God shows up in some way or at regular intervals throughout the year, we ought to stop what we're doing and celebrate. There are seven major festivals in the Jewish calendar and a number of other Jewish holidays. The purpose of these special times of the year is to step out of the busyness of life, remember and be thankful for God and what He has done and to enjoy life as He has blessed us. In John's Gospel, we see Jesus participating in these festivals.

As we come to the end of year, it is important that we as a church family at NBC stop, reflect, be thankful and celebrate what God has done in and through us. So some questions to help us to just that:

What has God done in your life this year (be specific!)?

In what ways has Jesus been shaping and transforming you?

How have you been impacted by this Community Group?

How are you different today than you were at the start of the year?

What are you thankful about within your Community Group?

Within your church?

Who do you need to personally and meaningfully encourage before the year is out?

What have you learned about Jesus this year that you didn't know before?

What sin areas of your life have you overcome?

How have you seen Jesus work through you?

How have you grown as family in the church community?

How have you grown more in Christ, in serving Him, this year?

Spend some time praying together as a group, especially being thankful to God for what He has done, is doing and will do!

WEEK SEVEN:
Responding To God's Love by Serving One Another

Read John 13:1-17

What is the whole premise of this passage?

What is the significance of washing one another's feet and what does it have to do with how we ought to relate to one another as a church family?

As Jesus insinuates, washing feet was the job of a lowly servant. People in those days wore sandals and would walk everywhere. After journeying between cities or around town, it's not hard to imagine the gunk and smell that would have accumulated. Yet Jesus, the very Son of God, does this for us as the ultimate sign of love. He then calls us to wash each other's feet. We obviously live in different times than John's audience. So how ought we to understand what this same idea looks like today?

What sort of picture comes to mind when you think of every person in the church community treating one another this way?

Read 1 John 2:3-11

According to verses 3-6, what is the true evidence that a person belongs to Jesus?

If someone looked at YOU (personally), would they come to the conclusion that you were a true follower of Jesus because you keep his commands, obey his word and live as Jesus did? If not, what do you need to change right now?

Who are the “brothers” and “sisters” John is talking about in verses 9-11?

Being perfectly honest, do you actively love your brothers and sisters in Christ? Are they actually “family” to you or just random people you run into once a week for an hour?

Read 1 John 3:11-18

What is the distinguishing mark of a Christian according to these verses?

Are you now, or have you ever, laid down your life for someone in the family of Christ? Explain.

Has anyone ever done this for you?

Do you currently have material possessions and know someone in need (currently) yet are doing nothing about it?

How can the love of God be in you (this is the question John is asking us)?

It is pretty clear throughout Scripture that we demonstrate our love for Jesus through caring for one another. Paul uses the analogy that serving is equivalent to taking care of your own body, so it can be functional, purposeful and healthy. No doubt many of us are serving one another in some capacity. If that is you, it is vitally necessary that you hear how important that is, how the church is better because of you, and how without you, the church would not be what it could be. So thank you.

If you are not serving or have been burnt out or unappreciated in the past or have a desire but simply don't know where to start, we want to encourage you.

The best place to be built up, spurred on and challenged is right here in your Community Group. These people, who you have spent some time with may be the best equipped to tell you things (giftedness, passions, places they can see you bless others) that you may not know about yourself.

Further, we would love to journey with you personally to help you learn and grow in your giftedness, manage your time/energy, work through past hurt. Please talk to one of the pastors and we would be more than happy to walk through this with you.

Finally, we will be starting something called the Connect Course early next year. This course is not just for new people who want to find out more about the church, it's a course that will work with you to awaken your passion for serving and link you into a place you can best feel used and important.

Spend the next few minutes right now going around the room and encouraging one another.

What things/abilities/gifts/passions do you see in each person?

What area(s) of ministry can you see them thriving in?

How have you personally been blessed by them recently?

It is our mission that we all see ourselves as

“God’s family on mission to make disciples of Christ.”

This is not just some statement we put on a wall because it sounds nice. It’s what we are biblically called to be and do.

Is this true of your life?

How can we come alongside of you to be part of this mission?

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NARRABEEN BAPTIST CHURCH

*Presenting Christ to Everyone
Presenting Everyone Mature in Christ*