

4th/5th December 2013

Home Group Study Notes

Crazy Love* (Chapter 10)

The Crux of the Matter



This book has been very thought provoking– but perhaps the most difficult part is living out what the Lord has been challenging us with throughout these sessions. That will take not only great honesty and resolve but a great dependence on God as we continually ask Him to work in and through us.

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you. *Romans 12:1-2 The Message*

*Studies inspired by "Living Crazy Love", a book by Francis Chan

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Honestly assessing how you've been challenged:

1. Looking back over what you've thought through so far, how would you say your thoughts, emotions and actions have been changed, if at all? What has it been like to experience any changes, such as greater obedience to God, deeper intimacy with Jesus – has it been joyful, hard, scary etc?

Following up these challenges with action:

“For a while we can live off of the excitement. But it always fades. Unless we learn to channel that excitement into concrete habits and pursuits we can maintain in the monotony of everyday life, the experience becomes a vague memory we'd love to recover but can't.” (Chan)

Read: Psalm 34:5 Proverbs 4:23 Romans 12:1-2

After expounding the Gospel in Romans chapter 1 to 11, Paul gives a summary of how we should respond to God's crazy love. (see first page)

2. Discuss what this might look like for you personally and how you might do this.
3. Have you ever had a 'mountaintop experience' or made a radical commitment that you failed to follow through? What stopped you?

One of the most dangerous enemies of passion is individualism. “God designed the church as a place where Christians serve, pray, live and worship together for a reason. We can't pursue God's will in our own way. We need to take the church seriously and look to one another for help, support, and inspiration as we seek to be transformed and to transform the world around us for the glory of God.” (Chan)

4. Since the last session, have we developed our growth in Christ as partners with your friends or Home Group folk. Be practical, and specific.

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Read: 1 Corinthians 12:4-14

Consider how Paul uses the idea of the body. "It's incredibly diverse, but it's also unified because every individual part of the body is transformed and recreated by the same Lord, and every part is empowered and energised by the same Spirit. So on one hand, we need to pursue that unity and focus on fitting together with the other parts of the body. On the other hand, we need to assess how God has made and gifted each of us individually and play our part in serving the church and the world." (Chan)

As we pursue God with everything that we have, He often provides opportunities, desires, and leanings that put us in the right place at the right time. As we approach the new year with renewed vigour and purpose, in a new building, and with new opportunities for service, take time to consider:

5. What unique talents, gifts, and interests do you have? What are you passionate about? How might you be able to use these unique aspects of your personal make-up for the glory of God? *(It may be helpful to note that there will be a course on Spiritual Gifting in February.)*

6. What do you think God is calling you to specifically pursue – perhaps things you can't get out of your mind?

In looking to find some God-given direction, we can often neglect the more obvious, specific commands that we should always be following.

Read: John 14:15 Matthew 22:39
James 1:27, 4:10 Matthew 6:14-15

7. What clear commands of Jesus may you be neglecting that you know you need to start obeying straight away? What steps do you need to take to help you? As a starter, think of/do one specific thing.

8. In the light of all we've looked at in these studies, what is the most important change you can commit yourself to making?

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Watch the Crazy Love DVD/Video Resource for session 10

In order to accomplish great things for God, we need the Holy Spirit to empower us. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit will equip us and enthuse us to engage with people in our families, communities and worldwide, so that we may share with others the saving grace of our God who is Love.

As we approach the celebration of the incarnation of His Son, what better way to conclude than by considering again this amazing 'crazy' love, and how this is reflected in our relationship with God and with each other.

I John 4:7-9

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: he sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

You may feel it appropriate to share the Lord's Supper as you worship this King of Love.

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Points to ponder:

- David McCracken's checklist questions (Colossians 3:1-11):
 - When your mind is filled with temptation, what do you do next?
 - When your brain goes into neutral, where does it go?
 - When did I last spend any time thinking of things above?
- As you contemplate your personal role, consider the specific role your Home Group may have to play as part of the church in days to come.
- The next Home Group meeting is on 18/19th December and is an opportunity to celebrate Christmas together in whatever way you feel appropriate.
- Following that, the next meeting is on 15th /16th January, but some groups may perhaps decide to get together informally before that.

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