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"The Love Boat"
In tribute to C.S. Lewis' Great Divorce
Opening drama for Love Track, Chapter Camp '97

The room is set up with chairs lined up surrounding a central space with three chairs. "Bill" and "Henri" are sitting in two of those chairs, with the empty chair in between them. Nautical decorations (life preserver, waves in windows, etc.) can be used. The First Mate welcomes all the track participants at the door with something like "Welcome aboard to the Love Boat! We're about to cast off soon, so please take a chair on the deck." As the scene begins, Bill is not paying any attention to Henri; he is speaking mostly to himself.

Bill: Ahhh, yesss! (He puts on sunglasses and pulls out a notebook computer) This is pretty neat. So, let's see what the latest market share results are. (taps a few keys). Alright! Super cool!

Henri awkwardly shifts over and begins to talk, trying to strike up a conversation.

Henri: Hey, nice ship, huh? And can you believe this is all free! I'm really looking forward to seeing this new land that we've heard about.

Bill nods politely, but is basically ignoring him.

Henri: I've heard that this new land is totally different from ours, different customs and lifestyle, even different beliefs.

Bill: Yeah, well, whatever. I just better be able to telnet to my network from there.

Bill turns his chair slightly, as if to catch a better angle to the sun. There is a long silence. Finally, Henri tries again to resume the conversation.

Henri: So... have you met your cabinmates yet? What's he like?

Bill: Oh, I don't have any cabinmates. I asked for a single.

Henri: You don't have a cabinmate? Are you sure? I also asked for a single but I found out that this boat doesn't even have any single rooms.

Bill: What? That can't be right!

Henri: No, it was one of the first things I asked the First Mate who welcomed us aboard.

He told me that it was the strict policy that that everyone has cabinmates on this boat.

Bill: Well, that couldn't possibly apply to all the passengers. You must be traveling second or third class section, right? You're probably in the lower deck section, right?

Henri takes out keys.

Henri: I'm in the upper deck, cabin D303. What's yours?

Bill fishes out his keys and looks at it incredulously.

Bill: D303! Wait a minute! This is totally random to the max! There must have been a mistake! Where is that First Mate fellow you spoke to? Hey, you! (Bill snaps his fingers) Yes, you! Come here! (aside to Henri): I'll straighten this out.

First Mate comes over.

First Mate: Yes, how can I serve you?

Bill: How can you *serve* me? I'll tell you how you can *serve* me! You can serve me by telling me why I am in a room with other people. Your computers have obviously bungled up the assignments because I expressly requested a single. What random software are you guys using anyways?

First Mate: As I explained to Henri already, we insist that everyone share rooms.

Bill: I am not everyone. I always travel in a single. I need a single. (Bill turns to Henri). It's nothing against you, uh what is your name again?

Henri: Henri. Henri Nouwen. And you are?

Bill: Why, I'm Bill Gates. (Turns to First Mate) And if you think I got to be the head of the most powerful corporation in the world by taking this sort of abuse, you need a faster processor. Wait a minute, wait a minute, I get it. You put me in with roommates and when I fall into sleep mode, ol' Mr. Nouwen -- if that's his real name -- downloads all of Microsoft's business plans. Who put you up to this, "Henri"? Folks at Netscape? IBM?

Henri: Bill, I am afraid I have no idea what you are talking about.

Bill: Yeah, right. I didn't get to where I am by forgetting to watch out for myself. And they call me paranoid -- with sharks like you out there.

First Mate: Mr. Gates, we put you with other roommates for your benefit. This is the Love Boat. How could you learn to love if you didn't have anyone to love? We do this with all of our passengers because otherwise they never learn. And if you didn't

learn, you would never make it thorough one day in the land we are heading for. The shock upon arrival would be just too great. But Bill, if you would like any help on learning how to enjoy, care for, feel affection for your roommates, I would be happy....

Bill: That is the stupidest thing I have ever heard! Get out of here!

The First Mate leaves.

Henri: Bill, that's what he told me also. When I asked him why I had to have roommates, he said something very interesting that I've been thinking about. You seem to be a smart guy, maybe you can help me figure it out. He said, "Well, Henri, the Love Boat is the only true reality in life." I asked him, "What do you mean that the Love Boat is the only true reality in life?" And he said, "You either love or you die." What do you think about that, Bill?

Bill: That is the second most stupidest thing I have ever heard! How random can you get! "Love or die?" The guy obviously doesn't know thing one about the real world. Henri, you either Compete or Die! You either Stand Out or Be Absorbed! You either Succeed or Disappear! "Love or die" -- hah -- the guy is living in some make believe fairy tale. He's totally out of touch with reality.

Henri: You don't think that there's any truth to what he says? Because I've been thinking about my life, you know, and...

Bill: If I had known that the cruise ship market was filled with such stupid operators, I would have gotten into this market. Wait, that's a brilliant idea! A virtual cruise ship experience! A complete multimedia software package with all the sights and sounds of a ship journey, but one that you can run from the privacy of your own personal computer. You can see and hear all the waves, beaches, whatever, but without having to leave your room. And of course it will all be digital so you'll get far better resolution than this (points to the scene around him). Yes, that's it! You know, my brilliance scares even me sometimes.

Henri: A virtual journey on a computer? Digital waves? A make believe ship? Doesn't that put one, well, rather out of touch with reality?

Bill: We'll call it "Portholes '97: A truly personal journey on your personal computer!" See, that's obviously the Achilles Heel of this industry, they don't allow you to make the experience personal. But Portholes '97 will allow the user to totally customize his or her preferences: menus that control degree of sunlight, amount of waves, size of room. Graphical interface to pick the destination of your choice. And of course, icons representing fellow passengers that you can just click and they disappear or appear according to how you feel.

Henri: I'm sorry, I must be missing something. Clicking people on or off depending on how you feel? That sounds so, well, rather impersonal, don't you think?

Bill: Henri, Henri, Henri. This is why you are not on the cover of Time. You don't understand the true meaning of "personal." Portholes '97 will totally revolutionize the travel industry! The key is that the traveler's enjoyment of the journey is no longer at the random mercy of who sits down next to you, the weather that just happens to be above you, the fleeting scenery that just happens to be passing by you, even the particular traits of the country ahead of you. No, Microsoft will bring the power and control back to where it belongs: to the user himself! He becomes the focus. His preferences dictate the experience. Don't you see, this ship is like all travel industries: they force the passenger to focus on all these forces outside of himself: he has to wonder who are the passengers travelling with me? What is the temperature outside today? Where are we on the journey? But the "personal" power of Microsoft means the passenger is the starting point. He or she is the focus. He can instead just wonder, "Who do I want to be today? What do I feel like today? Where do I want to go today?"

Henri: I see. Yes, I see. Bill, I think I am finally beginning to understand.

Bill: Good, good. Listen, I've got to jump on this idea before my competitors do. I need to find a way to get back to headquarters. I'll bet I could get our corporate helicopter to pick me up. That deck seems like its wide enough to land... if you get rid of all those people.

Henri: Yes, well, good bye. I guess you're not going to stay long enough to see this land we're headed towards, are you?

Bill: Henri, you gotta keep moving, gotta stay ahead. But, that's all right, I can always buy the digital rights to scenes from this land and incorporate it into my new product. What's the name of this land again?

Henri: It's called Heaven.

Bill: Heaven? Never heard of it. Let me see. (He taps on his computer). Hmm, doesn't even have a web site. Must be a pretty backward country. Doesn't sound like my kind of place, anyways. Well, see you, Henri.

Henri: I'm not so sure, but well, good bye, Bill.

Henri is sitting there pondering for a while. The First Mate comes over.

First Mate: He left, didn't he.

Henri: Yes, he didn't want to stay for the whole journey.

First Mate: That's sad. I was hoping he would do what it took to stick it out. But he wouldn't have lasted very long. Heaven would have been too real for him.

Henri: You mean he couldn't remain as focused on himself there?

First Mate: Exactly. He wouldn't be able to handle true reality. The shock of meeting the one some have called the Truly Real One would have been too much.

Henri: The Truly Real One? Who is that? Do all who go to Heaven meet him?

First Mate: He's also known by some of our more philosophically bent folks as The Other. But most of us just call him Father God. And yes, all who stick it out on this journey meet him. That is why he paid for the cost of the journey. He is eager to meet you face to face. And he is eager to meet Bill. But the Love Boat is too real, it has too much rock solid substance, it is too "hard" for some people.

Henri: It was too hard for Bill. I finally understood listening to him that he didn't wanted any reality but the reality of his own self, his own feelings, desires and preferences. You know, he's planning to create this software that is called Porthole '97 and it gives the user the power to...

First Mate: I know all about it. It's not anything new, believe me, despite what Bill thinks. I've seen different versions of this program thorough the ages: My Career, List of Achievements, Individual Potential, Personal Resume. They're all based on a very ancient code: Self 1.0. And any program that is based on Self 1.0 inevitably concludes in death.

Henri: Love or die, right?

First Mate: Love or die. Discover how to focus on The Other and others or focus on your self. Experience falling in love with the Father God and his children or keep falling into the abyss of self absorption. Learn how to head towards The Truly Real One with other real ones or disappear into false unreality. Learn to love or die.

Henri: But how do you learn how to do this? How do you learn how to love?

First Mate: Well, that's why you're on this journey.

REST OF THE SESSION:

Henri Nouwen recently completed the journey. He died earlier this year after a lifetime of heading towards Heaven. His journey took him too many places. For decades, Nouwen was an internationally renowned professor, writer, and lecturer on the spiritual life. He reached the pinnacle of his profession: teaching at Harvard, publishing dozens of best selling books, and a highly sought after speaker. In the last decade before his death, however, Nouwen left behind much of that to become a priest in a ministry called Daybreak, which is a small community of mentally handicapped people. He left because he increasingly realized that as much as he talked about Jesus and talked about love to students and audiences around the world, he needed to experience it firsthand himself with a group of people. Rather than moving from place to place constantly as an individual, he needed to learn to love some "cabin mates." This journey was not easy for him in the beginning:

He wrote in a book called The Road to Daybreak:

Very soon I was asking myself, "Do I really care for these people? Am I really willing to make them the center of my life? What do I really mean when I say to them, 'I love you' How faithful am I really? Am I capable of a lasting relationship? Or... is my attention for these broken people little more than my way of feeling better about myself?" Very few stones remain unturned. Care, compassion, love for neighbor, promise, commitment, and faithfulness.. I turned and turned these concepts in my mind and heart, and sometimes it felt as though the spiritual house I had built up over the years was now proving to be made of cardboard and ready to go up in flames... Often I doubted whether there was any solid ground under my feet. I am still in the midst of this struggle and feel quite poor in the face of it...

But even this struggle proved not the most excruciating... The most radical challenge came out of the question, "Is Jesus truly enough for you, or do you keep looking for others [and other things] to give you your sense of worth?" If anyone had asked me in the past, "Who is the center of your life?" I would have answered without much hesitation, "Jesus, who called me to follow him." But now I do not dare say that so easily. The struggle to become a full member of a community of faith has proved to be a struggle to let go of many idols along the way and to choose again and again to follow Jesus and him alone. Choosing life in community and choosing Jesus are increasingly appearing to me as two aspects of the same choice."
(page 222)

Choosing life in community and choosing Jesus are increasingly appearing to me as two aspects of the same choice. They are two aspects of the same choice because they both call us out of our

self absorption. Truly loving Jesus and loving people means we no longer focus on ourselves, our achievements, our problems, our feelings. You know what it is like to live as if you were the only reality: the miserable, shrinking and constricted experience of self preoccupation. Jesus gives us people to love in order to save us from that destination.

Love is that journey out of self preoccupation into preoccupation with Jesus and his people. Love or Die. This track is designed to help us make that choice for life with Jesus and others over the death that comes with self absorption. We want to participate in what is far greater and real than our own shrinking lives. As Henri Nouwen explained his decision to stick it out with the people of his community:

"The time has come to look up to [Jesus] who comes to me as says [in John 15:16], "You did not choose me, I chose you." I want my life to be based on the reality of Jesus, and not on the unreality of my own fantasies, self-complaints, daydreams, and sand castles. I know that by moving from self-centered reflections to simple adoration I will come increasingly in touch with reality, the reality of God and the reality of the people of God with whom I live."
(page 226)

The assumption of this track -- and the assumption of Scripture -- is that we naturally do not choose life and love. Left to ourselves, we tend to focus on our selves and our narrow little worlds. We need to learn and practice the way of love. So, in this track, each day we will take one aspect of love and learn some practical ways we can grow in love. Some of aspects we will work on: showing affection, generosity and servanthood, sharing Jesus with those we love, and how to invest in friendships.

We want to begin this journey together by sharing how we experience the choice between self absorption and love. [Have them break up into groups and discuss the following questions].

* What are the symptoms of self preoccupation in your own life? i.e.. What do you tend to focus on when you get into that mode? When does that happen the most?

* What have your experiences of love been like (by that, I don't just mean romantic love obviously)? What or whom have you really cared about in a way that took the focus off of yourselves? What did that feel like?

ending for everyone: pick out two people you would really like to work on loving. one of them preferably would be someone it is going to take some work (i.e. not someone you are close friends with already). put these names on a heart shaped piece of paper that i will pass out.

"LOVE LETTERS" by Curtis Chang

Drama for Session Two, "The Affection of Christ Jesus" / The Love Track, Chapter Camp '97

The scene is on the decks of the Love Boat. Maria is leaning over the railings, reading a letter. Every once in a while she looks up, smiles, and sighs.

Larry walks by, with a basketball in hand.

Larry: Hey, Maria, what are you doing? You look like you just won the lottery or something.

Maria: Oh, I'm just reading a letter.

Larry: A letter? From whom?

Maria: From my husband.

Larry: Your husband? I don't get it. I thought he was on this boat with you. Isn't he traveling with you?

Maria: He sure is.

Larry: So, I don't get it. If he's on the boat with you, why is he writing you a letter.

Maria: Well, he just wrote to tell me how much he appreciated the way I smile.

There is a long a pause as Larry looks at Maria befuddled.

Larry: I don't get it.

Maria: He just wrote to tell me he felt happy every time he saw me smile. (reading from the letter) He said: "The brightness of your smile is a beacon, a lighthouse flashing directions to the bright land we are sailing for." Isn't that sweet?

Larry: Yeah, that's nice. So, did you get into a fight or something? Is this his way of apologizing or something?

Maria: No, there's no reason. He just did it.

Larry: I don't get it.

Maria: He didn't always do this. It's something about this Love Boat, he's only started doing this since we began this voyage. He used to never tell me he loved me, much less say something about my smile. But lately, he's leaving several letters a

day for me, expressing all sorts of feelings. Yesterday, he wrote me that he noticed I had a special way of relating to other people that made them feel welcome. He wrote me that it was a gift from the Great Welcomer Himself.

Larry: Wow. That must be nice to get letters like that.

Maria: It's more than nice, Larry. Before he started writing those letters, I used to feel so lonely all the time. Even when we were together, I felt I was alone. Alone and anxious. And not just anxious about my relationship with my husband, but anxious about everything. I was always wondering, "Am I failing? Am I doing enough? What do other people think about me? Why am I doing what I'm doing?" But ever since we began this journey, I feel I'm not alone anymore. I feel, well, loved. He always writes on the envelope, "Beloved." And whenever I start feeling anxious or confused, I look at those envelopes and then it's like, "Yes, that's who I am, the Beloved." And I just stop wondering if I'm failing or what people think about me.

Larry: Man, it sounds like your husband is a pretty good writer. Is he a poet or journalist or something?

Maria: My husband is an engineer. He's hasn't written anything besides scientific formulas in years. But it isn't difficult. He told me the other day, "I never realized it was so easy to write a love letter!" Larry, you could do it.

Larry: No, no, I couldn't do it. I'm not that creative. I can't write anything original to save my life.

Maria: But that's why writing these sorts of love letters is so easy. The stuff he writes me is almost entirely borrowed from this collection of love letters he found on the ship.

Larry: Doesn't that bother you to get somebody else's love letters?

Maria: They aren't somebody else's. That collection was originally meant for me. And for you. For all of us on this ship. They were written by the Great Lover Himself, sent from the land that we're sailing towards. That's what makes getting my husband's letters so reassuring. I know that there is a greater reality, a greater love behind my husband. My husband is wonderful, don't get me wrong, but if it was just his words I was reading... well... deep down, I know he is just as anxious and confused of a person as I am. No, it's wonderful getting these letters because when I read his words, I know they are echoes of a Love too great for words.

Larry: Huh. That's really profound, Maria. I gotta think about that some more.

Maria: Larry, don't just think about it. There's only one way to learn about it and that's to

join in! Join the letter writing craze, Larry, it's the only way!

Larry: Well, uh, thanks. I appreciate this, I really do. But I don't know who I'd write a love letter to. I don't have a wife or a girlfriend.

Maria: Larry, that is NOT the only sort of love. What about the guys you're always playing basketball with?

Larry: What about them?

Maria: I watch you guys play sometime. It's so clear you love playing together and just being with each other. They seem like great friends. Why don't you write them a letter?

Larry: Maria, come on! We're guys! Guys don't do that sort of thing with each other.

Maria: Why not? Read the collection of love letters. They are filled with friends -- yes guy friends -- telling each other how much they love each other.

Larry: Noooo, I don't think so, Maria. What would the other guys think about me? They'd probably make fun of me for being all gushy. I'd feel weird. I'd feel unnatural. I'd feel like I was standing out. I wouldn't feel like I was just being one of the guys. I'd feel like a total dork doing that.

Maria: Larry, Larry, this is the Love Boat. For once, can't you just take your mind off of yourself?

SESSION TWO: AFFECTION OF CHRIST JESUS

"Having the guts of Christ Jesus." or "Practicing the spiritual discipline of affection."

Teaching

How many people here have ever written or received a love letter? How many people would like to ever write or receive a love letter? What do you think are characteristics of a good love letter? What makes it special? How does it make you feel to receive and to hear the letter?

Listen to Paul's letter to the Philippians; pretend you're the Philippians hearing it for the first time. (Read Phil. 1:1-8). What are the things you notice about Paul's language. How do you feel when you hear these things written for you? What is attractive about receiving a letter like this? What are things that are scary or threatening about receiving a letter like this?

Later on in the book of Philippians, and later on in this track, we're going to look at some of the things that are hard or costly about love. What Paul starts off with in his letter, though, is what we might experience as the pay off of love -- the part that we'd all like to jump ahead to without doing the hard costly things about love, if we could -- getting to experience real genuine affection for people. Paul's language is joyful. It is spontaneous. It is emotional. It is extreme and extravagant. And it has power only if it is for real. You don't get the sense that he had to put lots of e f f o r t and h a r d s h i p to force himself to write this part of the letter. He feels it. These are the things that make for a good love letter. When you imagine your lover writing you a love letter, you don't imagine him or her s w e a t i n g just to get the words out, or trying to write things that sound good. And if someone really feels this way about you, who wouldn't want to get this letter? When you receive a letter of genuine affection like this, whether from a lover, a friend, or a family member, you know that you are valued.

But where does Paul get this affection? Does it just naturally well up within him spontaneously? Is he able to genuinely feel this and do this for everyone? Is it that the Philippians are really so great in and of themselves? Look in verse 8. Paul's love for the Philippians is the compassion or NIV translation, the affection, or another way to put it is the "guts" of Christ Jesus. Paul's overflow of affection is not merely a human one -- it is neither that Paul in and of himself is so loving, nor that the Philippians in and of themselves are so great. Paul is not loving the Philippians out of his own human love, nor is he loving the Philippians as only their own human selves -- it is with the affection of Christ Jesus that Paul loves them. And Paul not only loves them with the affections of Christ Jesus, but he wants the same thing for them -- he wants their love to overflow -- to abound.

All of this might sound a little too abstract, a little too la-di-da, up in the air. But this is good news for us. The theme of the love boat is love or die, remember. We learn to focus on another, or in focussing on ourselves, we condemn ourselves to hell. And the fact is, none of us are born with the ability to love people, or all people this way naturally. Natural affection doesn't come to all of us with the same degree of ease. Some of us have temperaments that are more emotive than others, and we experience natural affection for more people more easily than others. Some of us come from families where we expressed affection more freely and openly than others. For all of

us, there is that person or people who just get on our nerves, that person we feel superior to, or that we feel intimidated by, or that we feel we have no particular reason to feel anything for. For all of us, there are major blocks in ourselves to our ability not to focus on ourselves but to focus on others. Let's face it, by ourselves we all have major limitations to the kind of affection we can feel or express towards others. And even the kinds of affection we can have naturally for people can get twisted. Anyone who's ever had a bad break up with someone they really cared about knows that affection can get twisted despite our best intentions. Psychology is full of cases of people who have loved "too much" not because they really love too much but because they've not loved aright. A lot of times our natural affections are more about serving ourselves than serving other people.

BUT, as Christians, we have access to the affection of Christ Jesus. We are called not only to love people, but to love them not with our own guts, but with Jesus' guts.

So, how do we get Jesus' guts?

The first step is to ask. "Lord, I would really like your guts for people." Prayed genuinely, earnestly and consistently, this is not a prayer that God will refuse to answer. We're going to have a chance to pray this prayer in a few minutes.

Secondly, we practice the spiritual disciplines of having Jesus' guts. We don't just wait for that mystical moment when we have Jesus' guts and love isn't any work anymore. Dallas Willard in *Spirit of the Disciplines* reminds us that star athletes don't all of a sudden just become star athletes during the short hours the athletes are on the field for the game. No, they have diet, rest, and exercise regimens, habits and disciplines, that build the foundation for their bodies' ability to play during the game. They do these disciplines and habits all the time to prepare their bodies and instincts for the game. In the same way in love and affection, we don't wait until that magical moment when we feel a burst of love for humanity and write them all love letters. We have to practice spiritual disciplines of love. Spiritual disciplines help us to live in what we know is true. These spiritual disciplines take time, they take energy, they take thought, and they take dealing with our own resistance. But they are what shape our hearts and lets us get to a place where we can love people genuinely the way Paul does. In the next few days we'll be considering some of the disciplines around serving others instead of thinking about ourselves, sharing our faith, and being generous. Today, we're going to have the opportunity to practice two disciplines that have to do with having the affection Christ for others. The first is the discipline of learning to see people as God sees them; the second is the discipline of expressing what we see to them.

Exercise.

We are going to practice knowing the affection of Christ for another person. Get together in pairs -- it can be with another person from your campus or someone from a different school. Introduce yourself briefly to each other if you don't know each other already. Pray together to ask God to give you his guts for people. This is a big prayer to pray, so only pray it if you're ready to ask for it. Then, one person will have the opportunity to ask Jesus to speak words or images of affection for the other person, and then vice versa. If you feel comfortable, you can put your hand on the other person's shoulder or knee. Briefly ask God to show you his affection for this person. Then, spend a few minutes in a listening posture, listening to what comes to mind.

How does God see this person? did any particular images come to mind? Did any words or feelings come to mind? Then, tell the other person what you sensed. Tell the other person about God's love for them. Be as specific and descriptive as you can. Now switch. Don't feel bad if nothing dramatic comes to mind during your time of listening; this is a listening exercise -- all of us need to practice and grow in our ability to hear from God through prayer. Also, we are listening for what we know to be true -- that God loves this person, enjoys them deeply, etc.; we are not looking for a particularly mystical or emotional experience, necessarily. The worst that can happen in this exercise is that we tell someone we know God loves them, and that we want to grow in loving them too. But if you do sense something that seems like it might be from God, then please share it freely.

Debrief.

What happened? What kinds of things did people say to you? How did it make you feel? What effects might this have on you? How did it feel expressing God's affection for another person? What is challenging about expressing this affection for you? What felt good about it?

Assignment. We are going to do one more listening exercise. Sitting where you are, ask God to show you one person at camp that he wants you to express affection for today. Ask him for his guts for that person. Ask him to show you what he sees in that person, what he loves and enjoys in that person. Then ask him to show you how you might express affection to that person today. It might be a hug. It might be telling them you appreciate them, enjoy them, etc. It might be telling them how much God appreciates them. OK. your assignment is to do that. You have between now and tomorrow at this time to do it. Make note of how the person responds. We'll report on it tomorrow.

Pray, dismiss.

SESSION THREE

"SELF-PROTECTION AND LOVE"

by Curtis Chang

The scene is, once again, on the decks of the Love Boat.
Sue is curled up on chair with blanket. Andy walks by whistling
and stops, obviously surprised.

Andy: Hey! What are you doing here all alone? Aren't you going to the "Come As You Are" Party.

Sue: No, I'm not going to that stupid party!

Andy: Stupid party! It sounded interesting. The First Mate said everyone would be there and there would be lots of opportunities to really get to know people.

Sue: It's a stupid idea of a party.

Andy: You think? I'm kind of intrigued. Did you get the invitation (pulls out a piece of paper): 'Check all false smiles and superficial small talk at the door' Sounds different from all the parties where we came from.

Sue: Well, I think it's stupid. I'm tired of all these "Get To Know The Real Other" events and parties. I'm tired of all these people. I'm tired of this ship!

Andy: Why? What's wrong?

Sue: What do you care? Why don't you go ahead to the stupid party with all your fakey friends.

Andy: What do you mean, "fakey friends?"

Sue: Fakey. Don't tell me you haven't picked it up yet? You know, "Hi! What's your name? How are you doing so far on the journey? Tell me about where you came from? What's your family like?" Give me a break! One fakey question after another. The crew is the worse. Like they really care.

Andy: You don't think the crew cares? I thought they were asking because they were really interested.

Sue: Oh, please! They don't care. They're doing it just 'cause it's there job. And the other passengers certainly don't care! They're doing it just 'cause the crew is telling them to. It's all so fakey. I hope you haven't told them anything really private.

Andy: Well..... gee... actually I have. I was just coming from a conversation with the

First Mate. We were just talking and talking. And he was telling me about sexual temptation he faces on a ship like this. And so I started telling him about some stuff from my past, about my sexual life before this journey. (puase) Do you think I shouldn't have?

Sue: Well, it's up to you, but if I were you I wouldn't be so naive. Who know what he's going to do with that information? How do you know he's not gossiping about you behind your back? He could be talking to the other crew members, laughing about you.

Andy: Gosh, I hadn't thought about that.

Sue: You've got to watch out, be smarter. That's why I'm tired of this ship. I'm not stupid enough to fall for this "share your life" crap. I see right through them. They want you to expose yourself -- it means they have power over you.

Andy: Maybe. But you know, when I was telling the First Mate my story -- it was about how I slept around a lot -- he responded in a way I've never encountered before. I was trying to make some joke 'cause I suddenly started feeling embarassed. But he didn't laugh. He was just very, very silent. And I started feeling more embarassed when I realized that he was silent because he was crying. Then well, I started crying.... well anyways, it was strange, but I felt...

Sue: Messy! You must have felt even messier and more embarrassed, didn't you? I hate it when I cry in front of other people. You know the other person is thinking "What kind of mess did I get into?"

Andy: Actually, I was going to say I felt good, well, good isn't the right word. It was like I felt more alive, seeing someone cry for me and crying myself. But I don't know, maybe the First Mate felt like I was a mess. I hadn't thought about that until now.

Sue: Ugh! I hate it when people pity me.

Andy: Ooooh, I hope he wasn't looking down on me. Do you think he was? I mean, maybe he was.

Sue: I refuse to have people look down on me. That's why I'm not going to that stupid party tonight. Like I don't know what everyone's really thinking when I walk into that ball room: "Look, there's poor Sue, coming to the party desperate to meet people because she is too fat and ugly to have any friends of her own.

Andy: What are you talking about? No one has ever said that?

Sue: Come off it. I'm not blind. I look at myself in the mirror every morning. I know people think I'm a loser.

Andy: No, that's not true. (pause) Do you think the First Mate thinks I'm disgusting... after what I told him?

Sue: Disgusting! You're so fat it's disgusting!

Andy: What! He said that about me!

Sue: No, no, that's what my mother always said to me at meal times. She was always trying to get me to eat less. 'Disgusting! You're so fat it's disgusting! Who's going to want to marry an overweight girl like you? Why can't you be more like your sister Ann? She's a size 2!'

Andy: Oh.... gosh, that must have been, uh rough.

Sue: That was nothing compared to some other things she's said to me. Boy, could I tell you some stories about what I've gone thorough with my family. We'd be here for hours. Not that you'd be interested or anything.

There is a long pause as Sue is trying to sound out Andy's interest and reaction. Andy is lost in his own thoughts.

Andy: Say, do you think the First Mate would actually tell other people about what I shared with him? He wouldn't, would he?

Sue: I don't know. Who knows on a crazy ship like this. Look at me, this place is making me so crazy I almost started rambling. Look, I gotta get out of here.

Andy: Yeah, hey... it was good talking.

SESSION THREE

Fear is the great enemy of Love. Fear is what Satan uses to tempt us from making the choice for love. Fear tells us that we must protect ourselves, guard ourselves. And, caught in this preoccupation of the self, we cannot love others.

Have the group discuss the drama in terms of self protection and the fear underlying each form of self protection.

Forms of Self Protection:

Not wanting to share own life. Not wanting to get involved.

Underlying Fears:

Rejection. What others will think about us. Be taken advantage of. It will get messy.

Have the group look back at the manuscript and at the example of Jesus. How does the example of Jesus speak to each of our underlying fear?

We can only love if we know what is the fear that prevents us, and give those fears to Jesus. Do exercise in identifying fears we have that prevent us from loving people.

Finally, examine which was your greatest fear in loving. Can you think of a way to practice overcoming that fear with one of your people you are trying to love this week? What specific thing could you do today?

LOVE AND FEAR

Rank the following scenarios in order of which would feel most fearful.

Try to identify as specifically as possible 1) what it would look like to choose love in this scenario; 2) what you would fear in each scenario and 3) what you would need to believe from our manuscript study in Philippians to overcome that fear.

_____ You're working on a paper that you would really like to get done that night. Your roommate comes back in and she is visibly upset. She doesn't say anything and just sits on her bed.

THE CHOICE TO LOVE:

FEAR:

WHAT YOU NEED TO BELIEVE FROM SCRIPTURE TO OVERCOME THAT FEAR:

_____ Jennifer is an Afro-American who you have met in a class. You are of a different ethnicity (if you're Afro-American, reverse this). You've had some conversations and you would like to get to know her better. You enter the dining hall alone and Jennifer is sitting with 5 others of her same race at a table. She sees you and waves a greeting.

THE CHOICE TO LOVE:

FEAR:

WHAT YOU NEED TO BELIEVE FROM SCRIPTURE TO OVERCOME THAT FEAR:

_____ You just received a D on your last Chem test. In his comments on the test, the professor suggests that you drop the class. After class, you are walking with a friend from that class. You know he is acing the course. He asks you, "So, how are you doing?"

THE CHOICE TO LOVE:

FEAR:

WHAT YOU NEED TO BELIEVE FROM SCRIPTURE TO OVERCOME THAT FEAR:

After large group, you are hanging out with your closest friends. You haven't seen each other all week. You decide it would be fun to go tonight to the cool new club that's just opened off campus. As you're getting ready to leave, you notice Jack who has come to large group for the first time. You know him only casually from a common class. As usual, he is alone, wearing his thick coke bottle glasses, his usual attire of plaid shirt, pocket pen holder, and cordorouy pants.

THE CHOICE TO LOVE:

FEAR:

WHAT YOU NEED TO BELIEVE FROM SCRIPTURE TO OVERCOME THAT FEAR:

You are friends with both Karl and Nancy who are dating each other. You stop by Karl's room and he and Nancy are shouting angrily at each other. Both of them individually have talked with you before about problems in their relationship.

THE CHOICE TO LOVE:

FEAR:

WHAT YOU NEED TO BELIEVE FROM SCRIPTURE TO OVERCOME THIS FEAR:

Rick is someone you would consider as one of your best friends. However, you discover that when his parents came to visit, he invited 15 people to go out to dinner with his parents. You were not one of them. You have tried to forget about this incident, but several days later you are still feeling hurt and upset.

THE CHOICE TO LOVE:

FEAR:

WHAT YOU NEED TO BELIEVE FROM SCRIPTURE TO OVERCOME THIS FEAR:

SESSION FIVE: GENEROSITY

Review manuscript.

How were the Phillipians generous? What did they give (both in today's passage and in previous passages)? Why was that important?

According to Paul in this letter, what is the motivation for this generosity? What happens to people as they give of themselves?

Generosity is crucial to choosing the way of love over the way of self. By practicing generosity, we take part in God's love. And that love frees us from our self preoccupation. Read Nouwen, Return of Prodigal Son, pp. 122-3:

In order to become like the Father, I must be as generous as the Father is generous. Just as the Father gives his very self to his children, so must I give my very self to my brothers and sisters. Jesus makes it very clear that it is precisely this giving of self that is the mark of the true disciple. "No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends."

This giving of self is a discipline because it is something that does not come spontaneously. As children of the darkness that rules through fear, self-interest, greed, and power, our great motivators are survival and self-preservation. But as children of the light who know that perfect love casts out all fear, it becomes possible to give away all that we have for others.

As children of the light, we prepare ourselves to become true martyrs: people who witness with their whole lives to the unlimited love of God. Giving all thus becomes gaining all. Jesus expresses this clearly as he says: "Anyone who loses his life for my sake... will save it."

Every time I take a step in the direction of generosity, I know that I am moving from fear to love.

As Nouwen said, generosity is a discipline. We need to practice it. Moreover, we need to practice generosity like the Phillipians did: with forethought, with care to what the other needs, with attention what one possesses that one can give to the other.

We will practice this now with one of the people you have chosen to try to love at camp this week. Do worksheet that analyzes their needs and your resources for today. Emphasize the invitation to give to them not just what is easy, but what would be generous.

Emphasize that the way of love takes discipline and commitment. This will be especially true next year when you return to campus and all its voices that tell you to just pay attention to yourself. Invite them to pick four people (preferably non Christians) who they want to love next year.

Do worksheet that analyzes needs and resources for the whole sememster.
Review worksheets.

GENEROSITY AND LOVE

Person You Want To Love: _____

Your Resources

His/Her Needs

Possessions

Money to eat out or go out

Money for gifts

Clothes

CD's

Computer

OTHERS:

Social

A group of friends

Knowledge of fun places to go around town

Time to be with him/her

OTHERS:

Skills

Computer/Typing

Cooking/Baking

Academic expertise

OTHERS:

Emotional

Time to listen

Empathy

Asking good questions

Ability to show affection

Encouraging notes

OTHERS:

Spiritual

Prayer

Knowledge of the Gospel

Insight into friends' lives

OTHERS:

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE GENEROUS TO THIS PERSON TODAY AT CAMP?

WHAT WILL YOU NEED FROM GOD TO LOVE THIS PERSON THIS GENEROUSLY?

GENEROSITY AND LOVE

Person You Want To Love: _____

Your Resources

His/Her Needs

Possessions

Money to eat out or go out
Money for gifts
Clothes
CD's
Computer
OTHERS:

Social

A group of friends
Knowledge of fun places to go around town
Time to be with him/her
OTHERS:

Skills

Computer/Typing
Cooking/Baking
Academic expertise
OTHERS:

Emotional

Time to listen
Empathy
Asking good questions
Ability to show affection
Encouraging notes
OTHERS:

Spiritual

Prayer

Knowledge of the Gospel
Insight into friends' lives
OTHERS:

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE GENEROUS TO THIS PERSON NEXT YEAR ON CAMPUS?

WHAT WILL YOU NEED FROM GOD TO LOVE THIS PERSON THIS GENEROUSLY?

SESSION FOUR: TALKING ABOUT JESUS

The LOVE Track

Goal: Loving people means that we tell them about Jesus. This session will give us some tools for starting conversations about spiritual topics.

Drama 10 min

Talk--Introduction 10-15 min

I. Paul as a model

In Philippians, chapter 1, we learn that the whole imperial guard has heard that the reason Paul is imprisoned has to do with Jesus (v12-13).

Why is that? Paul has used words to communicate his faith. He articulated the connection between his actions and Jesus. Sometimes we think that loving people is enough to bring them to Jesus, but it is not true, we need to explain that the reason why we love has to do with Jesus, "the J word".

Imagine Paul's conversations with people around him, "Paul, why are you in here?" "Let me tell you..." Jesus comes up, then the gospel. Paul takes advantage of the opportunity to let people know he's in chains for Christ.

II. Our experience

Is this true for us? Do people know what motivates us, what we live for? No. Why not?

We have opportunities all the time to bring up our faith. People are always asking us, "Where were you?" "What did you do today?" So the question is, why don't we talk about Jesus? I think there are 2 reasons why. The first has to do with fear. We're scared to bring up our faith and afraid of what people will think of us. The second reason is that we don't know how. We don't know how to talk about our faith when it comes up, or how to bring it up in conversations. We need some tools.

Today, we're going to talk about some tools to equip us to talk to our friends about Jesus. I think having some confidence that we can do

this and some tools in our tool box will help us get over our fears.

III. Tools. Go over following handout and share personal examples where possible.

Tools for Talking about Jesus
(possible handout)

1. **Seize the Moment.** Take advantage of opportunities to bring up Jesus. When someone asks you how you're doing, talk about something God is doing in your life or what you learned last night in Bible Study.
2. **Intrigue.** Be intriguing in your responses. Shock them if you have to. Don't just say, "I was at Chapter camp." Plan ahead, think of ways to be interesting, so those who hear you will want to ask more.
3. **Initiate good questions.** You can start conversations about spiritual things. Here are some questions you can ask your friends:
 1. What is your religious background? How involved are you in it?
 2. I'm curious, do you ever think about spiritual things?
 3. Where are you heading in your spiritual journey?
 4. What is your impression of Christians today?
 5. What do you think a real Christian is?
 6. Do you ever wonder what happens to us when we die?

From Becoming a Contagious Christian

4. **Tell your story.** Be personal and let people know how you became a Christian, or talk about a difference Jesus has made in your life. Being vulnerable will go a long way. Be careful to use real language that they can understand, not God talk.
5. **Make the gospel relevant.** Tell them one aspect of the gospel that relates to their life. Don't worry about telling them everything at once. Most people become Christians over a period of time and many conversations.

Comments:

Loving our friends involves telling them about Jesus.

You'll learn from your mistakes. (Don't expect yourself to be an evangelist like Paul overnight)

Mention Jesus, and see what happens, it could be exciting!

Worksheet exercise

This is a worksheet to fill out individually (10-15 min) and then talk about in small groups (5-10 min) It's hard to show by email. There are 5 columns. A situation, how'd you normally respond, the tool to use, the new response, and what gets trashed-- referring to what of our "resume" might you need to give up.

I can get you all hard copies by mail this coming week.