



You may remember this picture of NYPD Officer Lawrence DePrimo that went viral last November. On a cold night in Times Square DePrimo came across this shoeless man. DePrimo could have walked by him and no one would have thought twice about it. But one tourist noticed the compassion of Officer DePrimo who went and bought a pair of boots for the shoeless man. She snapped this photo with her phone and almost overnight it went viral.

When asked, "Why?" DePrimo said that he just had to do something.

Early January, at an Applebee's in Mason City, Iowa, an air ambulance crew of 13 people sat down for dinner. They had attended a memorial service for three flight crew members from another air service that had died in a crash. As the meal was coming to a close the waitress walked over to the team leader. She told him the meal was paid for and handed him this napkin which read, 'For all you do and in memory of your teammates, this meal is on us.'

The team was overwhelmed with the act of kindness and agreed that they would pay forward the gesture done to them.

When asked why he posted the picture of the napkin the team leader said, he wanted to honor those who died by motivating others to pay it forward. "It's motivation for myself and everyone who sees it to do something similar."

On many occasions people have asked me why I go to Sierra Leone. Here are two reasons. Sia and Emmanuel are two young people I met this year.

Sia is a precious little girl that I met in Yengema. She is fortunate in that she can attend school. She needs to know that there is hope and a future and that there are people who love her.



Emmanuel was a young man we met at our hotel along the beach. He wants to become a pastor; but unfortunately he lacks two things. First, he had to drop out of school to help his family; and secondly, he did not have a Bible. I gave him the Bible I had with me and wrote a note to him on the inside cover. I watched him walk around and show others the Bible.

Why do I go to Sierra Leone?

Why does a cop buy a homeless man boots on a cold night?

Why does someone buy dinner for 13 daring helicopter pilots, flight doctors and nurses?



Because we watched what God does and choose to follow his example by walking in the way of love.

Whether you are 5 or 65, whether you are male or female, single or married, Christian or uncertain; the world can benefit from our decision to walk in love.

Whether you walk in love at your home, at work, at school, in the community, close to home or around the globe; the world needs more people who will follow God's example. Because when we follow God's example of walking in love the world is a better place!

Jesus is the perfect example of what it means to follow God's example. In John 5:19 Jesus says that he '*does only what he sees his Father doing.*' Like any child who models their parent's actions, Jesus watched to see what God the Father did, and then he did it as well.

If you are a parent, I'm sure you can think of things you are glad your child has modeled from your life. If we are honest there are also a few things which we wish they hadn't learned from us.

I don't want to get ahead of where we are going next week with our Lenten Series: Impressions; but you can be sure we will be learning much about the impressions that we leave; both on our children and the people we interact with every day.

I like the way the Message translation states Ephesians 5:2: 'Keep company with God and learn a life of love.' Why did Jesus do what he did; because he kept company with his Father. And you and I can learn how to walk in love by keeping company with Jesus. As we read the first four books of the New Testament-Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John- we see over and over again how Jesus lived. He loved the un-loveable, he spent time with the people no one else cared for, and he met the needs of people.

Jesus reminded his disciples once when they were fighting over who was the greatest; that he *did not come to be served, but to serve; and to give his life as a ransom for many.* Mark 10:45

Maybe that encounter with the disciples, that statement from Jesus, was on Paul's mind when he said that following God's example and walking in love is best seen in Jesus' giving himself up for us.

Again, the Message translation of the Bible brings out the full impact when it says: 'observe how Christ loved us, not cautiously but extravagantly! He didn't love in order to get something from us but to give everything of himself to us.'

That is our goal! That is how our life is to be led! We are called to a life of extravagantly giving of ourselves, not holding anything back! That is how we change the world, the nation, our community, our homes, our relationships. Being a disciple of Jesus is not about having an easy life. Disciples of Jesus don't live cautiously; they live extravagantly, they live all out for others and not for themselves.

Now let me say something specifically to the couples here today. In a few moments some of you are going to renew your vows. I hope that you realize that you are called to model

something that our world needs desperately: Husbands and wives who love each other more than they love themselves.

As you share those vows with one another, my prayer is that you will once again commit to giving yourself fully to the other. My guess is that if you've been married for any length of time you have already discovered the power of being self-giving.

As a couple, when you model that self-giving, rather than self-satisfying attitude, you demonstrate to your children, to other couples and to anyone who knows you that you are following God's example of walking in love.

And my prayer for all the couples here is that you will each love extravagantly and without caution so that you give everything of yourself to the other. In doing so, I believe that you will demonstrate to the world that it is possible to walk in love in this selfish world.

In the video clip <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/52673/love-comes-to-life> that introduced this message today we were all reminded that love is action, it is sacrifice, it is serving, it is honoring God, it is giving... That is something of a challenge in world that more and more thinks only of self. So whether you are single or married, young or old, my prayer today is that all of us will begin to change the world by pouring out the extravagant love on others that we have found Jesus poured into us.