

2009 Holiday Sermon Series
“Tag – You’re It”
Pastor Dale Campfield – Eastgate Community Church
December 6th, 2009

Intro:

Matt 28:19 “Go and make disciples of all nations...”

ECC Process of Discipleship: Making an IMPACT...To Love...To Grow...To Serve

We have 3 priorities – To love...which is expressed in our Sunday morning celebration and connection groups. To grow...which is expressed in our Path to Discipleship. To serve...which is expressed in our daily lives in the places we live, work and play; as well as through the local church. The vision of E.C.C. is to gather together weekly for corporate worship, loving God and each other; then to come together in small Connection Groups for discipleship and fellowship, and are regularly involved in reaching out to others with the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ through community outreach. To Love...To Grow...To Serve!

Today, we will continue with the “2009 Holiday Sermon Series” with “Tag – You’re It!”

When you hear the word “TAG”, there are many things that may come to your mind.

For example:

- A Name Tag – something you wear to signify who you are.
- An Animal Tag – when someone marks an animal to signify the owner or type of animal.
- Tag a Building – this is when a person, sometimes in a gang, marks a building.
- Tag Team – when the WWF wrestlers would tag each other for help in the ring.
- Laser Tag – a mock war game played in dark with lasers.
- Tagged on FACEBOOK – when a person identifies you in a picture on the web site.
- Sales Tag – when you’re bargain shopping, you look for the sales tag; signify a special deal.
- Dog Tags – wore by the military around their necks shown their ID.
- Frozen Tag – the game when you freeze when touched by someone else.
- Chinese Frozen Tag – the only way to get unfrozen is for someone to crawl between your legs.
- TAG – the traditional game when touched – your it!

TODAY’S SERMON: “TAG – YOU’RE IT!”

Everyone knows how the game works. One person is appointed to be “it”. That person then tries to touch someone else and then they become “it”. When you touch them you say, “You’re it.”

Spiritually, Christ has touched us and He’s saying, “You’re it. Now, go tag someone else.”

7 FACTS SURROUNDING THE SPIRITUAL GAME OF TAG

#1: The Fact is: It = Love

Christ has touched you with His love. His love for you shows no bounds. His love for each of us is greater than we can possibly imagine. God doesn't just express love, He is love. He doesn't just share it, He is it! Christ is love. Everything about Him is love. And the fact is, while we were still sinners, Christ still loved us; as the Bible says.

1 John 4:8

"The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love."

God is Love: How do we Define Love? "God is Love", but how do we define it? The American Heritage Dictionary defines love as "an intense affection for another person based on familial or personal ties". Often this "intense affection" stems from a sexual attraction for that other person. We love other people, or we say we love other people, when we are attracted to them and when they make us feel good. Notice that a key phrase in the dictionary definition of love is the phrase "based on". This phrase implies that we love conditionally; in other words, we love someone because they fulfill a condition that we require before we can love them. How many times have you heard or said, "I love you because you are cute;" or "I love you because you take good care of me;" or "I love you because you are fun to be with"?

Our love is not only conditional, it is also mercurial. We love based on feelings and emotions that can change from one moment to the next. The divorce rate is extremely high in today's society because husbands and wives supposedly stop loving one another or they "fall out of love". They may go through a rough patch in their marriage, and they no longer "feel" love for their spouse, so they call it quits. Evidently, their marriage vow of "till death do us part" means they can part at the death of their love for their spouse rather than at their physical death.

Can anyone really comprehend "unconditional" love? It seems the love that parents have for their children is as close to unconditional love as we can get without the help of God's love in our lives. We continue to love our children through good times and bad, and we don't stop loving them if they don't meet the expectations we may have for them. We make a choice to love our children even when we consider them unlovable; our love doesn't stop when we don't "feel" love for them. This is similar to God's love for us, but as we shall see, God's love transcends the human definition of love to a point that is hard for us to comprehend.

God is Love: How does God Define Love? The Bible tells us that "God is Love" (1 John 4:8). But how can we even begin to understand that truth? There are many passages in the Bible that give us God's definition of love. The most well known verse is John 3:16, "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" So one way God defines love is in the act of giving. However, what God gave (or should we say, "who" God gave) was not a mere gift-wrapped present; God sacrificed His only Son so that we, who put our faith in His Son, will not spend eternity separated from Him. This is an amazing love,

because we are the ones who choose to be separated from God through our own sin, yet it's God who mends the separation through His intense personal sacrifice, and all we have to do is accept His gift.

Another great verse about God's love is found in Romans 5:8, "*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*" In this verse and in John 3:16, we find no conditions placed on God's love for us. God doesn't say, "as soon as you clean up your act, I'll love you;" nor does He say, "I'll sacrifice my Son if you promise to love Me." In fact, in Romans 5:8, we find just the opposite. God wants us to know that His love is unconditional, so He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us while we were still unlovable sinners. We didn't have to get clean, and we didn't have to make any promises to God before we could experience His love. His love for us has always existed, and because of that, He did all the giving and sacrificing long before we were even aware that we needed His love.

God is Love: It's Unconditional God is Love, and His love is very different from human love. God's love is unconditional, and it's not based on feelings or emotions. He doesn't love us because we're lovable or because we make Him feel good; He loves us because He is love. He created us to have a loving relationship with Him, and He sacrificed His own Son (who also willingly died for us) to restore that relationship.

God is Love: How *Should* we Define Love? When the Scriptures say, "God is love," they aren't telling us that God is some nebulous, warm fuzzy feeling of love. The writers who penned the scriptures weren't saying that in our limited form of human love we will find God. Not at all -- in fact, when we read that God is love in the Bible, this means that God *defines* love. And when we say that God defines love, we don't mean that He defines it like Webster might define something -- we mean that God is the very definition of love itself. There is no such thing as love without God. As hard as we might try, we cannot define love outside of knowing God. This essentially means that our human definition of love is false.

God is the Creator of all things, and by His very nature, He is love. God says love is unconditional and sacrificial, and it's not based on feelings; therefore, love is not an "intense affection... based on familial or personal ties". To understand what true love is and to be able to truly love others, we must know God, and we can do this through a close personal relationship with Him. We can have that close relationship with God by putting our faith in Jesus Christ, who was God's sacrifice of love for us.

God is Love: True Love Only Comes Through a Relationship With Him God is Love! As such, true love -- God's love -- can be summed up in this passage of scripture: "*Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.*" (1 John 4:7-11)

If you want to know this love - true love -- get to know God. He is ready to pour out His love on you, and He wants to teach you how to love others as He loves you.

#2: The Fact is: You've been tagged by God – You're it!

God is saying the words, "Tag – you're it. You're my love that I want to express to the world around you. You're my hands and feet. You're my voice to the world." We've been tagged, touched and given the love of Christ. And, most of the time, it's His love that came to us through another individual. Someone shared the love of Christ with you in some type of way; either in a practical serving way, a sermon, a friendship, whatever it might be.

For me, it was my parent's unconditional love that touched me. As well, it was the love of my pastor's, especially Bob Smith and Bill King. They showed me how to be a Godly man. They spent time with me.

I'm sure today that His love has touched you and changed your life.

John 15:16

"You did not choose me, but I chose you..."

ABOUT THE TOUCH/TAG OF JESUS It is an incredible touch.

- His is a touch of PASSION – It wasn't just a casual brush, or a clumsy bump. It had emotion behind it. I can sense the passion behind the voice.

- His is a touch of POWER – Lame men walk, dumb men talk, deaf hear, blind see, devils flee

- His is a touch of PRIVILEGE – We did nothing to deserve it. But this is the touch of a King.

- His is a touch of PERMANENCE – Something about his touch, about his voice. It lives on. It forever changes us.

- His is a touch of PURPOSE – Here is what I came to talk to you about. His touch was a touch of purpose.

o It was ON purpose. (Never a chance meeting)

o It was FOR a purpose. (Always had a reason)

Ultimately - it was a touch to be PASSED

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. John 14:12 (NKJV)

Jesus wasn't just touching people... He was playing tag! He was touching them on purpose, and when he touched them, THEY WERE "IT"!

- He said "Peter, you're it." God was in that touch

- Peter said, "Matthew, you're it" – and God was in that touch.

- For 2000 years the game has continued... And the hand of Jesus Christ has touched from generation to generation, from country to country. The voice of Jesus has spanned the globe.

#3: The Fact is: You must tag someone else.

You've got to touch someone else with the love of Christ. It's not an option. God's word tells us to love others. His Word commands us to love others. It's not an option. It's not a matter of waiting until "I'm trained to love others." It's doing it now. We can't keep making excuses as to why we can't share the love of Christ with someone. We've got to do it now.

John 15:16

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit-- fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name."

#4: The Fact is: What you have is transferable.

It's supernatural in its origin, but natural in its practicalities. God's love can be transferred from you to others. At the same time, the flesh, the enemy, the works of the enemy can do the same thing. It's a matter of sowing and reaping. You can sow good works and love of God or just the opposite. But it is transferred. It's like the flu, when you get around those people, you're infected. It's time for us as Christians to infect someone else with the practical love of Jesus Christ.

Remember when we were kids how our mom used to tell us that we could catch a cold if we went outside without our coats and hats and got too cold or especially if we got our heads wet?

Truth is, germs, not cold weather, cause colds. The reason we catch more colds in the cold winter weather is because we're indoors more and in closer quarters with other people and their germs.

You don't get sick from cold weather. You get sick from germs from other people who sneeze or cough in your face or transmit germs with their hands to objects that you touch.

Research shows that the most common way to get a cold is from someone who has a cold, sneezes on his hands, and then shakes yours. Germs are contagious. Germs are the agents that transmit colds and viruses.

Now why do I bring this up? We must "Be Contagious!" spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ; about sharing the joy we have in Christ by intentionally coming in contact with those who are yet to make the great choice of following Him. We must love on people in the most practical of ways!

Mark 1:40 – 45 A leper tagged by Jesus.

A leper was in the presence of Jesus. Jesus had compassion on him and touched him. The leper was healed. Jesus told him to tell know one; but he told everyone and everyone then came to Jesus looking for the same touch.

40 A man with leprosy came to Jesus and knelt down. He begged, "You have the power to make me well, if only you wanted to." 41 Jesus felt sorry for the man. So he put his hand on him and said, "I want to! Now you are well." 42 At once the man's leprosy disappeared, and he was well. 43 After Jesus strictly warned the man, he sent him on his way. 44 He said, "Don't tell anyone about this. Just go and show the priest that you are well. Then take a gift to the temple as Moses commanded, and everyone will know that you have been healed." 45 The man talked about it so much and told so many people, that Jesus could no longer go openly into a town. He had to stay away from the towns, but people still came to him from everywhere.

#5: The Fact is: Those who need to be tagged are usually running from you.

Historically, as Christians, we've been chasing them away from God because of the way we've gone about it. I've heard many people say, "If that's what a Christian is like, I don't want anything to do with it."

Are you running from God? Many people today certainly are trying, but you can't run from an omnipresent God. Why do people run from God anyway? Why attempt the impossible?

John 3:20 gives us the answer in simplest of terms...

"All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed."

Often times, sin is the culprit. The reason why most people run from God is because of their love for sin.

At other times we're plain and simply chasing them away...

Historically, we've been:

- a. **Too Untouchable.** So heavenly minded we're no earthly good.
- b. **Too Hypocritical.** We don't practice what we preach.
- c. **Too Weird.**
- d. **Too Apathetic.** We just don't really care; and they know that we don't care.
- e. **Too Competitive.** Trying to TAG as many as we can to put them on a notch on our Christian belts to show everyone how HOLY we are.

#6: The Fact is: We must tag those who haven't been tagged.

As Christians, for years the church has been having there own little "tag" game right in the church, not reaching out, completely inward focused in their touches. We must get out of the four walls of the building we call church, and be the church, the body of Christ, and go into the world and touch someone. We've got to go to the un-churched, the ungodly, the hurting, the needy, the broken, etc. etc. etc.

Mark 9:37 – 38

"He said to his disciples, 'The harvest is great, but the workers are few.'"

#7: The Fact is: We've got to follow Jesus into the world.

God is going into the world to touch them; let's follow Him. Let's go with Him. He's going there, let's follow Him.

Jesus, in Luke 5 is fishing with the disciples. They can't catch anything. Jesus tells them to cast on the other side. They did and caught a multitude. Then Jesus says to Simon Peter...

Luke 5:10 – 11

“Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.” So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.”

Illus: Video – “Follow You” by Leeland

Conclusion:

3 QUESTIONS: Have you slowed down enough to be TAGGED by God? Are you running from the Love of God? Do you have what it takes to even have an effect upon someone else when you tag them?

#1: Are you running from God's TAG?

#2: Do you have “it” (Christ's love) to where you can effectively TAG someone else?

#3: Are you doing it?

It's time to go out and TAG someone with the love of Jesus Christ in a practical way that they too can receive His love and have their life changed. And when you do...

TAG, YOU'RE IT!

Please realize what is happening here. This is not a social gathering. This is not an educational seminar. The Spirit is speaking. Jesus is touching. There is a transfer of power taking place... and you're it!

Right now – heaven is at attention. All eyes are on you. You are the most important thing in the Kingdom at this moment. The world is waiting – for you.

- Quit waiting for someone else to make a difference in your situation... You're it!
- Quit waiting for others to do the right thing... You're it!
- Quit waiting for someone else to speak a word of faith – to extend a hand of friendship. You're it!

Remember that you may be the only Jesus that someone ever sees. You are his hands and feet. You are his voice in the world. I encourage you to pass along that touch – on purpose!

You might say, I don't know how to preach. I don't think I can teach a Bible study. Jesus didn't start his earthly ministry by preaching...

His first official act of ministry was to turn water into wine.

We've been saying that when you touch someone – it is the touch of God.

Matt 25:37-40

"Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'"

I'm saying that when you touch someone – on purpose – YOU ARE ALSO TOUCHING GOD! That means - the moment you speak into their lives, they are "it". And God is "it" – again. And isn't that what you want? It's all about God, and them. Ultimately, It's still All About Souls!

TAG, YOU'RE IT!

You want to discover life and purpose - to discover Jesus again? Go touch someone in His name! And as you do...

You Watch... You Wait... You'll SEE!