

(Basics) 42. Jesus Love Is Seen in His Dying

by Zac Poonen

Jesus' love is characterized by gentleness, selflessness, and a desire to do good to others, and is the key to manifesting the nature of Christ.

Duration: 13:10

Scripture: Matthew 5:45, Matthew 12:20, Luke 19:41, Luke 19:45, Acts 20:35

Topics: "Gods Love", "Christian Stewardship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding that God blesses us with material possessions so that we can use them to bless others. Jesus taught that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and his love compelled him to use his possessions to benefit others. The speaker also highlights Jesus' compassion and willingness to be inconvenienced for the sake of others. Jesus wept over Jerusalem and used a whip to drive out those who were misusing the temple, but his actions were motivated by love. The sermon emphasizes the need for Christians to demonstrate this same love by doing good and delivering people from the oppression of Satan, just as Jesus did.

Transcript

And we want to consider today something more about the meaning of love, a word which is much misunderstood, but which we can understand clearly when we look at the life of Jesus and see how we can have the same love in our life for other people. One mark of love is gentleness. Jesus was gentle with all people, particularly with people who were battered by life, who had fallen into sin.

Jesus loved especially those who had fallen deeply into sin. He came to help such people because they were rejected by everybody else. The woman caught in adultery, the thief on the cross, rejected criminals.

Jesus went, picked them up and encouraged them. He saw the good points in those weak, sinful people and He hoped for the best in everyone. You know, Jesus was this type of person whom other people would just long to be with because He was so understanding, so kind, so gentle.

You know who were the people who avoided Jesus? Those who were proud, those who were hypocrites, those who had some secret sin which they were afraid He would expose. The Bible says that Jesus, Matthew 12, verse 20, it says, Jesus would not break a bruised or a battered reed. A reed is a very small little thing and if that's bruised or battered, most people would throw it away and pick another reed because reeds are cheap.

But Jesus wouldn't do it. And a wick that's burning very dimly, Jesus would fan it to a flame. That's what it says there.

He would not quench a dimly burning wick. You know that? That if you're like a battered reed, weak, most of your life broken, Jesus cares for you. He can bring you back into His perfect plan for your life, even if you're like a battered reed or a dimly burning wick or a wick that's about to die out.

Jesus saw the good points in people. He always hoped for the best. His love was not sentimental.

He always sought the highest good. That's why He rebuked Peter with strong words of admonition. You can't rebuke people strongly unless you love them.

When James and John were seeking for places of honor, He rebuked them. When they wanted to call down fire on the Samaritans, He rebuked them. He rebuked His disciples seven times for unbelief.

Why? Because He loved them. If He didn't care for them, then He would have just not corrected them at all. He wouldn't have bothered whether they went to hell or anywhere.

And so we see that Jesus was not afraid of speaking the truth, even if it hurt others, because He loved them. He was concerned for their eternal good. He was not seeking a reputation for being known as a kind person or that that reputation for kindness would be lost if He spoke strong words.

No. He loved other people more than He loved Himself. And so He was willing to sacrifice His reputation in order to help other people.

He spoke the truth firmly because He did not want men to be ruined eternally. So in one sentence we could say, the eternal welfare of men mattered more to Jesus Christ than their opinions about Him. And a true Christian is like that when he encounters other people.

Their eternal welfare means more to him than all their opinions of him. Once when Peter was in the house of Cornelius and he was talking about the ministry of Jesus to them, he summed up the whole ministry of Jesus in one sentence. In Acts of the Apostles, chapter 10, verse 38, he said, Jesus went about doing good and delivering people who were oppressed by the devil.

You see what the ministry of Jesus was? Doing good. Not just preaching, not just saying nice words, but actually doing good to people and delivering them from the oppression of Satan. He didn't just want to win souls.

He loved the total man. He was concerned about man's physical need. There was a time when there were more than four thousand people who had been with Him for three days.

You read about that in Matthew 15. Three days. And they didn't eat anything.

And Jesus was concerned. He said, let's provide them with some meal, something to eat. He was concerned about man's physical need.

He taught us to pray, give us this day our daily bread. And wherever He went, He did good not only to the souls of men, but to their bodies. He cared for people who were sick and suffering.

He cared for the worst of sinners so much that His enemies would taunt Him, saying, oh, He's a friend of tax collectors and sinners. But that's what He was. He was a friend of the most despised people in society.

And a true man of God will be like that also. You know, you can be like that. What's hindering you from loving people who are despised by others, from loving people who are low in society? It's your own sense of dignity.

You don't want to be like Jesus. You want to have a respectable type of Christianity with a respectable type of people? No, it's not natural for man to go around becoming friends with the outcasts of society like the lepers and things like that. But Jesus did that.

You know, we seek to make friends with those through whom we can get some benefit for ourselves. Our love is selfish. Jesus' love was selfless.

It was pure. It's not by all this cultural refinement and nice words that we manifest the nature of Christ. It's by love, a love that seeks the good of others, a love that enables us to be their servants like Jesus was.

Jesus washed their feet, not to impress them with His humility, but because He loved them. You know, whenever Jesus did good to others, He never had the slightest thought that He could get something in return. Jesus used an example of the sun.

The sun shines on the evil and the good, He said in Matthew 5.45. And what is the sun expecting in return from all these people? Nothing. What about the rain? He used the illustration of the rain also. He said the rain falls on the righteous and the unrighteous.

And what is the rain expecting in return? Not even a word of thanks. Nobody looks up at the sun and says, Well, thank you for rising this morning and shining upon us or giving us light. But the sun is not bothered.

Even though nobody thanks it, it still rises in the morning. And Jesus said, Be like that. Be like your heavenly Father who gives His sunlight to good and evil people, whether they thank Him or not.

Nobody turns up to God and says, Thank you, Lord, for giving me sunlight this morning. But He still sends it. No, Jesus was not interested in getting something in return.

See, God's nature is one which wants to give and give and give and give. That is as natural for God as it is for the sun to shine and shine and shine and shine. And Jesus came to earth and manifested that nature of God, seeking to do good and serve and help and bless wherever He went.

Whether people appreciated it, whether they thanked Him or didn't thank Him, it didn't make a difference to Him. See, it's not easy to manifest this type of love. Human love is so selfish.

If that fellow loves me in return, then I continue to love him. That is the way we can distinguish between human love and divine love. There is a lot of difference between the two.

In divine love, it doesn't matter to us whether the other person responds or not. We just continue. Consider the way Jesus used His money.

In John 13, 29, we see that Jesus used His money basically for two things, to buy what was needed and to give to the poor. Now, Jesus was not a great rich millionaire, but He still found some money to give to those who were poor. He taught people, it is more blessed to give than to receive.

And His love taught Him that whatever possessions God gave Him were to be used to bless others. How many of us have understood it? How many Christians are there in the world who have understood this, that God gives us material things so that we can bless others, use them for the benefit of others? This is love, when we learn to love people and use things to bless people. Let me say something else about His preaching.

We read of a time in Luke 19 and verse 41 that He wept over Jerusalem. Why did He weep over Jerusalem? He used such strong words when He preached. And little later we read in the same chapter, verse 45 of Luke 19, that He used a whip.

But before He used the whip, He wept. This was the balance. Let me mention another aspect of Jesus' love, and that is, you didn't have to see a secretary in order to meet with Jesus.

Now in the world, if you want to meet a big man, you've got to meet a secretary first. What secretary did Jesus have? Anybody could meet Him. Nicodemus could go in the middle of the night, wake Him up and speak to Jesus, and Jesus was ready to talk to Him.

Once Jesus was so busy helping people that we read in Mark 3, verse 20 and 21, He did not even have enough time to eat. He did not have anybody to regulate the access of people to Him, saying, You can't come to me. You know, when you become so busy that you cannot meet with ordinary people, you have become more busy than Jesus Christ.

When you need a secretary to prevent people from meeting you, you're not a servant of God anymore. You're just a businessman. You're running an industry, not a Christian church.

The relatives of Jesus thought He was insane to allow people to take so much of His time, but that is because He loved them. Jesus was freely approachable. Once they brought sick people to Him at sunset, we read in Luke 4, verse 40, and He spent the whole evening till late into the night, praying for them, laying His hands on them, healing them.

He did not feel His time was His own. His time was for other people. He came to live, to do God's will, to bless them, and He was willing to be inconvenienced.

And this is why the mighty gifts of the Spirit that were manifested through Jesus brought life. You know, miracles are a dangerous thing if they are not operated in love. This is the love of God that we need to flood our hearts.

Let's ask God to give it to us, a love that's concerned, even in His last moments, to bring a thief into God's kingdom. When the world around us sees such love, they will be drawn to Jesus. Let's ask God to give us this love.

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