

Brand New: Part 4- What Does Love Look Like?

I. ME

- A. You know who I hate?... Anyone who hurts my kids
 - 1. Adults
 - 2. Other Kids
 - a. *Kid at park w/ Danny*
- B. No matter what you do for me... it won't make it better.
 - 1. B/c there's no point in trying to make peace with me until you've made things right with my kid.
 - a. Buy me gifts
 - b. Give me money
 - c. Do a bunch of nice things
 - d. Tell me how great I am... sing songs about it
 - e. Tell me how much better I am than you
 - f. Praise my holy name
 - 2. None of that matters... I won't be moved or impressed
 - 3. And if you come begging for my forgiveness and asking me what you can do to make things right... I'm going to tell you to go make things right with my kids.
 - 4. There is nothing you can do FOR ME to make up for hurting one of my kids.
- C. On the other hand....
 - 1. You do something great for my kids and we can be best friends.
 - 2. Some of my favorite people are the people who love my kids.
 - 3. The best thing you can do for me is doing something kind and good and going out of your way for one of them
 - 4. One of the best ways you can love me, has nothing to do with me, has to do with how show love to my kids.
- D. Isn't that interesting?

II. WE

- A. New Church
 - 1. Experiment- Church for people who don't normally go to church
 - 2. Trying to separate all the religious baggage from what it really means to follow Jesus
- B. Part 4 of New Series... Brand New
 - 1. The arrival of Jesus signaled an end to the Temple model and the beginning of something brand new.
 - 2. Last week... History Lesson...our consciences, our approach to God and others has been fine tuned, or shaped, by a blend of both.
- C. Temple Model
 - 1. Sacred Places- Sacred Texts- Sacred Men- Sincere Followers
- D. Jesus Model... Brand New
 - 1. New Covenant- New Command- New Ethic- New Movement- New Relationship - New Life
- E. A lot of what people resist about the church is from the blending of these two. 4th Century.
 - 1. The things people resist about the church are the things the church should resist.
 - 2. As a result of blending, we hold attitudes and approaches to life, God , and others that hold us back. From experiencing the freedom of New Relationship and New life and from sharing God's love with others.

- F. Last week... List of tendencies we have that show how the temple thinking has crept into our consciences.
1. Wondering how close you can get to sin w/o sinning
 2. I'm a good person. My good outweighs my bad
 3. Other people's sins or failings give you a feeling of moral superiority rather than compassion
 4. There's some kind of ritual that makes you right with God and removes your responsibility to make things right with someone you've harmed
- G. That's all temple thinking... not the Jesus way
1. If your views or your beliefs keep you from loving the person next to you... that's temple model thinking.

III. GOD

- A. At the heart of all of this is a very subtle and very important distinction
1. At the heart of the temple model is the fact that it is all about you and all about me.

B. The Temple model is YOU-centered

1. At the heart of the temple model is the question... A good question to start w/ but not a very good one to hang on to.
2. **What must I do or believe to make things and keep things right between God and ME?**
 - a. It's self focused... b/c at the end of the day MY religion is all about ME (whatever the religion is)
 - b. Making sure God is fine with ME
3. At the center of my approach to God is not God... but ME.

4. Examples...
 - a. How we pray... Help me, bless me, give me...
 - b. Why you go to church
 - c. Why you give
 - d. Why you serve
 - e. Why you obey
 - f. Stuff that looks God centered, but at the root your religion, your approach to Xianity, or God, is really all about YOU.
 - g. I really need to... church, act together, stop doing... I, I, I, **God help ME.**
 - h. Temple Thinking... not Jesus.
5. **Temple thinking gravitates to laws/rules and rituals.**
 - a. You evaluate your relationship with God by your behavior... "What **EXACTLY** must I do to make things right and keep things right between God and me?"
 - b. Good question initially, but if you're a Xian you have to move beyond what's in it for me and how to I make God happy?
 - c. B/c Jesus taught, The eye-witnesses to his death and resurrection taught.... that once you choose to trust Jesus, place your faith in Him, you and God are fine... you have a new perfect, eternal relationship with your Heavenly Father.
 - d. So trying to spend the rest of your Xian life trying to get God's attention or make sure He still likes you... is pointless and just plain selfish. Temple Thinking.
 - 1) Keeps you from ever maturing.
 - e. Rules/laws make us push to the limit...
 - 1) How far is too far?

2) How much can I get away with before God zaps me?

f. Rules/laws make us look for and manipulate loopholes.

1) Exception to the rule... thinking.

2) It's all about me getting what I want w/o losing the good stuff from God.

6. **Temple Model creates hypocrites**

a. Why do many hate the church

b. Live one way during the week, but on Sunday they empty their sin bucket and think they are right with God.

c. Say they are one way and act completely different and then invite you to their church... or look down on you for not going to their church.

7. If you just add a little Temple to Jesus... you will always lean towards... God what I must I Do, what must I say, to keep you happy w/ ME?

8. It's a subtle form of self-centered religion that Jesus came to end and Jesus has invited us to completely abandon forever.

C. B/c... **The Jesus model centers on the YOU next to YOU.**

1. Democrats... the you to your right. Republicans... the you to your left.

2. Racists, bad attitude toward, enemies.

3. Jesus invites you to abandon worrying all about you and embracing all the you's around you.

4. And when you get this... it transforms how you read what Jesus taught, what Paul taught, what the New Testament writers taught. Brings it alive in a whole new way.

5. It transforms how you see your place in the world and the place of those around you.

a. B/c everything they said was an invitation to love people the way God loves them.

6. It's why Jesus said... **"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." John 15:12**

a. That's it? YEP

b. Not ten... just 1

c. The well-being of the people around you should shape all of your decisions.

7. Which is why the Apostle Paul could say... **"The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love." Gal 5:6**

a. Why?

8. **"For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Gal. 5:14**

9. Complete 180 from Temple Thinking... from any type of religion where you have to do this or that to make whatever god pay attention to you and not hurt you.

10. If you love yourself the way God loves you and love others the way you love yourself... you'll see that wanting what's best for others is also what's best for you.

D. **Subtle but important difference between Temple and Jesus**

1. Do you know why you should **tell the truth**?

a. Thou shalt not lie? God said so... (True but wrong answer)

1) Temple Model says tell the truth b/c the TEXT tells you to

b. Jesus Model- Tell the truth b/c when you lie you hurt the person you lie to.

1) When you lie you are covering yourself at the expense of someone else

2) You are saying, "You are not worthy of the truth. Whatever is best for you is secondary to what's best for me."

c. Temple Model says I'm going to tell the truth so God will love me.

- d. Jesus says, “No you tell the truth b/c you love people the way God loves them.”
 - e. And you love yourself enough to be honest about who you are
2. Do you know why we should **be generous**?
- a. B/c If I give God\$10 He'll give me \$100?
 - 1) God likes it when we give (cheerfully)... so if we give God will like us?
 - b. Super Complicated... We are generous b/c it helps the person we are generous to.
 - c. BUT it also helps you too...
 - 1) B/c when we understand that everything already belongs to god it allows us to trust Him and it frees us from worrying about everything.
3. Do you know why you shouldn't **gossip** or talk bad about someone?
- a. 'Cause it's in the Bible?
 - b. B/c it hurts someone else... it lowers them in the eyes of other people.
 - c. You're raising yourself up at the expense of some one else.
 - d. Do we need a verse to tell us that it's loving yourself at the expense of someone else?
 - e. A verse to tell you that this helps you too?
 - 1) We can either build others and our relationships up or destroy them
 - 2) People have ruined marriages b/c of the way they have talked negatively about their spouse.
 - 3) Negative talk leads to negative feelings that can destroy a relationship.
 - 4) You benefit too when you refuse to lower someone else with gossip.
4. Do you know why you shouldn't be casual about your **sexuality**?
- a. Easy... sex leads to dancing.
 - 1) Cause the Bible says sex is for married people?
- 2) Oh b/c things won't be right with God... and you'll suffer the consequences... consequences might happen... cause and effect.
- b. No b/c you are robbing the other person of intimacy later.
 - c. You are creating a regret for them later
 - 1) If you do anything to diminish the God intended sexual experience of another person later, you have sinned against THEM.
 - d. And Jesus followers don't sin against other people.
 - e. Love means when they think about their biggest regret... you make sure its not you.
 - f. Do you really need a Bible Study to tell you that you shouldn't create a regret for someone else?
 - g. And Jesus followers don't shrug it off by saying they really only sinned against God...
 - 1) “God I know I sinned against you and you're mad at me, but I've prayed the prayer, and you have to forgive me b/c you said you would... so now we're good.”
 - 2) Jesus says, “You may feel like we're good... you're conscience might feel fine... but she's/he's not good b/c of you.”
 - h. “Yeah but what if its totally **consensual**?”
 - 1) Uh oh... you got me there.
 - i. Little brother/sister... “Hey me and my best friend are going to go poke each other's eyes out with a spoon. But don't worry... it's consensual!”
 - j. Don't do it! “But it's consensual.”
 - k. Yeah but don't hurt you and don't hurt another person.

- l. "But there's no verse that says I can't!"
- m. Don't need a verse to tell you that You hurt yourself while you hurt someone else.
 - 1) You create regrets for yourself and the other person
- E. Do you really expect God to give us a verse for every situation in every person life?
 - 1. **The New Testament imperatives** (rules/commands) are examples of how to demonstrate your love for God by loving others.
 - 2. It's why Jesus said the entire OT Law could be summed up with Love God and Love your neighbor as yourself. Same with NT
- F. Everything is an example of, a commentary on, and application of what it means to love God by loving your neighbor.
 - 1. God didn't try to cover everything
- G. Do you need anything deeper/meatier/more spiritual than... Love your neighbor as yourself?
- H. B/c God loves you and them. And striving for what's best for them is ultimately what's best for you.

IV. **YOU... PAY ATTENTION!!!**

- A. "So Jon, you're kinda dumbing down, watering down Xianity?
 - 1. I can see where some of our minds might go there.
 - 2. So we're throwing out the details... what about this and what about that?
 - 3. Is this just some big Christian Hippie Love Fest?
 - a. "Just love each other man."
 - b. Some sloppy sentimentality where we don't have to take the text, the Bible, HOLY Scripture seriously?
 - c. **LISTEN CAREFULLY**

- B. **The Jesus Model is less complicated... but far more demanding.**
 - 1. At the core of the Xian faith is a man, who claimed to be God, who many eye-witnesses believed was God
 - 2. Who died covered in his own blood and the spit of other people... that's how far this goes... that's how demanding it is.
 - 3. It's far simpler... but it's so much more demanding.
- C. **It's easy to hide in the temple.** In the temple approach to Christianity.
 - 1. "Oh I don't think that's what that verse really means"
 - 2. "The original Greek says this but what Paul really means is..."
 - 3. "You know it doesn't mention that..."
 - 4. "Oh that's just in the OT"
 - 5. That's temple Model Religion.
 - a. You will always find a loophole.
- D. **It's hard to hide from...**
 - 1. *In your relationships with each other have the same mindset as Jesus Christ (Phil 2:5)*
 - 2. *Love your enemies and do good to those who hate you (Luke 6:27)*
 - 3. *Be merciful just as your Father is merciful. (Luke 6:36)*
- E. Imagine what your family would be like if we got this right.
- F. There is nowhere to hide when you are following Jesus... no loopholes or shortcuts
 - 1. We almost always know the answer to... "In this situation... **What does love look like?**"
 - 2. That is the essence of following Jesus

V. **WE**

- A. This is why the first Xians were so irresistible.
 - 1. They got it.
 - 2. They didn't even have the Bible, but they knew how to love one another and even their enemies.
 - 3. There were rich masters and poor slaves treating each other as loved brothers and sisters

4. There were Jews and Gentiles (Different races) trying to outdo one another in their love.
- B. And if you think its too simple... too easy... if you think this is watered down...
1. Remember when God asked this question... it cost him his son.
 2. This New Relationship with God... this New Life of Freedom cost Jesus His life... b/c that's what love looked like.
 3. And then he said... FOLLOW ME.
 4. And it's simple... you just answer the question... What does love look like? And then act on it.
- C. Yeah but Jon, and I'll email you later about this, you're kinda leaving God out of the equation.
1. You're saying God is fine, if you trust Jesus to forgive and save you then you don't have to really worry about what God thinks of you.
 2. Clear things up with your brother, b/c if you love your neighbor you and God are good.
 3. This sounds pretty "US" focused.
 4. What about the GLORY of God? I mean isn't this all about and for God's glory?
 5. Great question... and Jesus answered it.
 6. And I hope it bothers you the way it bothers me.

D. Matthew 25:31-40(Each verse separately)

1. V. 31- Son of Man... GLORY
2. V. 36- Huh? No we went to church (the house of God) to visit w/ you. I invited you into my heart. Tried to get you to look after me.
3. V. 38- When did I see you?
 - a. Singing and I felt the goose bumps?
 - b. I pictured you carrying me on the sand?
 - c. When we went to the Holy Land?
 - d. When we went on that retreat, Bible study, prayer meeting?

- e. When I worshipped in nature?
4. Good things, but Who got the most out of it?
 - a. That awesome quiet time? That worship time?
 - b. Those are good things but the essence of following Jesus isn't about YOU.
 5. V. 40- You did for ME
- E. The Jesus Model Centers on the you beside you.
1. **Your devotion to God is illustrated, demonstrated, and authenticated by your love for others.**
 2. Not your love in that ethereal, invisible, intangible, spiritual stuff.
- F. Did I tell you that if you mistreat one of my kids... all the singing, and giving, flattery, and sucking up in the world won't make up for it?
- G. Did I mention that the best way to honor and love me has nothing to do with me but is to honor and love my kids?
- H. It's kind of like... whatever you do for one of them... it's like you're doing it for me.
- I. What if this whole thing is that simple?
1. As simple as "What does love look like?"
 2. And to love God I will love you and the harder you are to love the more honoring it is to my Father in heaven.
- J. What if we just got that right?
1. It will change your family
 2. It will change you
 3. It will change this city
 4. And it has the power to change this world.