

I. ME

- A. Welcome/Online/Connect
- B. Adulting 101
 - 1. It's hard being/becoming an adult
 - 2. We just want to live our life and have it be easy and fun... have good things just happen to us
 - a. We almost expect it and feel like we deserve it
 - b. And then get mad when it doesn't happen...
 - 3. That's not how the adult life works...
 - a. It's hard... it takes work.
 - 4. If you want a better life you need to BE better at life.
 - 5. Why we are doing this series... some tools on how to Be better at life.
 - 6. **Following Jesus makes your life better at you better at life.**
- C. Talked about how distractions entangle us and keep us from being better at life
- D. One of the most entangling is Poor Relationships.

II. WE

- A. Relationships are one of the most difficult and one of the most necessary parts of life.
 - 1. **Relationships affect every aspect of our lives.**
 - 2. Healthy relationships just make life better
 - a. Where would you be without the support of family/friends/teachers/coaches/mentors?
 - b. Motivate you/inspire you/comfort you/ help you
 - 3. On the flip side- Unhealthy relationships make life miserable
 - a. Most of your regrets involve some kind of damage to a relationship... either caused by you or by them.
 - b. Draining/ makes you not want to get out of bed/ consumes your thoughts/ frustrates you

- 4. Even healthy, seemingly good, relationships can turn into all-consuming anger/annoyance with just a few seconds and/or a few words...
 - a. You love them... but you can't stand them and you've never been angrier in your life!
 - b. That's how my friends describe it... I've never experienced it.
- B. So why are relationships so hard?
 - 1. **For me**-- B/c people won't do/think/say what I want them to.
 - 2. Isn't that kind of the core of it for all of us?
 - 3. **James 4:1-2a** (...fight.)
 - 4. **The primary problem in all of our relationships is... us.**
 - a. Who's been at the center of every disagreement/fight/broken relationship you've had?
 - b. That marriage/friendship/colleague/boss/teacher... YOU are always there; the common denominator
 - c. So to start HAVING better relationships WE need to BE better at relationships
- C. So what can we do to change?
 - 1. **Warning:** You are probably not going to like the answer.
 - a. It's going to at least annoy you... and probably deep inside offend you... you won't want to admit it... so I'm doing it for you.
 - b. So what about...?**
 - 2. Jesus actually laid it out for us in one of his most famous teachings.
 - 3. Not a follower... off the hook.
 - a. Principle can still be applied and will make a difference in your life. You are invited but not required to try it out.

III. GOD (Luke 6:27-36)

- A. **V. 27a** (I say)- Are you listening?
- B. **V. 27 ab** (Love your enemies)
1. Enemies? I don't have enemies.
 - a. When you get in that angry place THEY are your enemy in that moment.
 - b. They are an adversary you are trying to defeat.
 - c. Who do you fight more with... strangers or people close to you?

C. V. 27-28

1. LOVE your enemy

- a. Love- not the feeling... a choice... an action
- b. **Jesus' type of Love**= actively seeking the good of someone else.
- c. **The key to better relationships is counterintuitive love**
- d. It doesn't make sense. It's not at all what we would naturally do...

2. Do good to those who hate you?

- a. Go out of your way to make their life better when they are actively trying to make your life worse.

3. Bless those who curse you?

- a. Speaking good of someone who is speaking badly of you

4. Pray for those who mistreat you?

- a. Hardest one for me
- b. When it's just you and God... you pray for them... Not that God would get them or make them realize you are right or to get them to change...
- c. But for God to show His love to them... that He would keep them safe... that He would give them fulfilling lives.

5. Why so counterintuitive... don't we want to do these things?
 - a. Boil it all down... **FEAR** What?!
 - b. It's about self-preservation... We're afraid to look weak/wrong/like we are lower than them/we're afraid of being vulnerable.
 - c. Why I hate apologizing to Liz: "yeah but I..."
 - d. **Fear keeps us from choosing love**
 - e. And... we like the feeling of being the hurt one/the right one/the victim... it gives us the upper hand
1) Me reporting to the insurance companies
6. Jesus is saying... face your fear and have the courage to choose love.
7. Then HE gives us some real-life examples of what that would look like.

D. V. 29-30

1. "Oh he must be exaggerating to make a point."
2. Maybe not hard and fast rules for every situation but the main principle can't be ignored.
3. **Jesus' love is self-sacrificial, vulnerable, and unfair.**
 - a. All rights are abandoned
 - b. You will most likely be taken advantage of
 - c. You don't get what you THINK you deserve
 - d. And they get what they don't deserve.
4. The he summarizes it... even if you don't believe he's God you have to admit there's never been someone as insightful as Jesus...

E. V. 31

1. **Golden Rule**- Not just so they know how **YOU** want to be treated.
2. **Completely different** than anything else before it... It was always “Do to them what they do to you” or “Don’t do to them what you don’t want them to do to you.”
3. **Even Moses** was an eye for an eye...
4. But to literally “love your neighbor as you love yourself.”
5. Completely revolutionary and unthinkable at the time.

6. Tones, misspeak, over-react... stop for a second and think... do you give yourself the benefit of a doubt?
7. Jesus is saying... “Do the same for others.”
8. You love yourself unconditionally, you give yourself the benefit of a doubt... that’s how you want to be treated... that’s how you need to treat others.
9. “HEY, but I’m kind... when people respect me and treat me well I treat them the same.”

F. V. 32-34

1. Sinners = People you don’t like
2. You treat people well who you feel deserve it or have earned it?
 - a. Jesus says, “Dilly dilly... Good job... Here’s your cookie... That’s what everyone does!”
3. Most people are good to those who are good to them... that’s nothing special.
4. That’s easy... b/c how many people actually truly deserve it?
5. It’s how you treat them and respond when they don’t deserve it that makes the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships.
6. But why... how does this kind of self-sacrificing, vulnerable, unfair love make MY life better?

G. V. 35a

1. If you want a better life... love better.

2. So everyone pretends to be nice and we just get walked all over?
3. Better life... are you kidding me? All of this sounds terrible!!

H. V. 35b-36

1. “He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.”
 - a. That’s YOU... that’s me... everyone
 - b. Jesus is the opposite of **KARMA**
 - c. He makes the rule of an eye for an eye **OBSOLETE**.
 - d. He is **merciful**... doesn’t give us the bad we deserve.
 - e. He is full of **grace**... gives us good that we don’t deserve
 - f. **Sin-God-Jesus-Faith**
2. When you trust that Jesus loves you, become a Jesus-follower/Child of God... you experience something incredible and unique; **you are free to simply love**.
 - a. You’re free to be vulnerable and love sacrificially b/c you know Jesus is taking care of your needs
 - b. It’s ok that life isn’t fair... b/c you know Jesus will reward you; you leave true justice up to him
3. What’s there to worry about? Why would you hold on to anger and hurt? Why do you need to be so quick to take offense?
 - a. Offense is something you have to take for it to have any impact... if you’re offended it’s b/c you choose to be.
 - b. Love prevents you from being or playing the victim.
4. When you accept that forgiveness and restored relationship the Holy Spirit fills you and enables/empowers you to live like what you are a child of God... **Galatians 5:22-23a** (self-control)

5. God’s love frees us and empowers us to love.

6. It's not your love... It's God's love for that person shining through you.
 - a. You're just the glove that the hand is using to get the job done.

IV. YOU

- A. So how do we do this... today, tomorrow, on Thursday when it's almost been all week and they just won't let up?

B. In your relationships...

1. Ask what does love look like?

2. Then have the courage to **ask God to love them like that through you.**

3. Then **celebrate progress not perfection**... both for you and others.

- a. Acknowledge when you react kindly when you would've bitten back
- b. Acknowledge when they give you the benefit of a doubt when you might not have.
- c. Forgive others and ask for them to forgive you.

- C. Don't have to be a Jesus-Follower to try it...

1. But what if... you believed God loved you so much that He died for you... and loves that person next to you the same way... would that improve your relationships in any way?
2. Would you be willing to try it for a week? A day?

V. WE

- A. Think about it... What would your marriage look like if you both were asking what does love look like?
- B. How great would your friendships be if you all had the goal of allowing God to show His love through you?
- C. What if all your neighbors, all of the people around you, gave each other the same benefit of a doubt they wanted for themselves?
- D. Someone has to go first...

E. You are never more like Jesus than when you love someone who doesn't deserve it.