

JESUS & COMPASSION | THE GOSPEL OF LUKE | OCTOBER 13

Scripture: Luke 6:27 -36

This passage speaks to God's character. He is compassionate, merciful and generous to all. His love absorbs sin – ours and the sins of others. The cross informs us that perhaps we can bear the sins of others because of the absorbing love of Jesus that flows through us.

Love Your Enemies

- Are you willing to listen?
- What is this love Jesus is talking about?
 - Agape love – unconditional love – God's love for us
 - This love remains firm even in the face of great persecution, hatred and abuse (Luke 23: 34; Acts 7:60)
- This is the kind of love Jesus is asking his followers to demonstrate

Three Commands

- Do good to those who hurt you
- Bless those who curse you
- Pray for those who hurt you

Three Examples

- If someone slaps you on the cheek, offer the other cheek also
- If someone demands your coat, offer your shirt also
- Give to anyone who asks, and when things are taken away from you, don't try to get them back

The golden rule: Treat others how we would like to be treated, regardless of how they treat us

Jesus Calls Us to Be Different

- We live in a society where most people have an ethic of love
 - They love those who love them
 - They will return good for good, evil for evil
- Jesus teaches us to repay good for both evil and good
- Through Christ's Spirit living in us we can live differently
 - We can live counter culturally

Children of God

Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we are at our worst. Our Father is kind, you be kind (Luke 6:35-36 The Message)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- This passage reveals God's character and his heart – is this the God we believe in?
- Who is our enemy?
- Where do we find ourselves in all of this? Are we at the beginning, part way through or coming to a place where we can love that "enemy"?
- Who can we be praying for in order for our hearts to be transformed?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If there is time:

- What are your thoughts on N T Wright's statement?

We must admit with shame that large sections of Christianity down the ages seem to have known little or nothing of the God Jesus was talking about.

Much that has called itself by the name of Jesus seems to have believed instead in a gloomy God whose only concern is to make life difficult and salvation nearly impossible. (N T Wright)