



Jason Smith - I Love My Church Part 5 Jesus Matters

Romans 5:8

Jesus must be the center of our lives and our church.
Follow His example and share His love with others.

Introduction: Jesus Leads Us into the Light

- During the first two weeks, we learned:
 - We are commanded to love one another.
 - People matter because every person matters to God.
- But we cannot truly love people without first understanding the One who makes that love possible: **Jesus Christ**.

Illustration: Lost in the Forest

- Imagine being lost in a dense forest.
 - It is dark.
 - You cannot see the path.
 - You do not know which direction leads to safety.
- Suddenly, you see someone approaching with a lantern.
 - The guide does not merely point toward the path.
 - He walks with you.
 - He leads you out of the darkness and into safety.
- That is what Jesus does for us.
 - He finds us in our darkness.
 - He shows us the way.
 - He leads us into His marvelous light.

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” — Romans 5:8

1. Jesus Loves Us Sacrificially

Scripture: Romans 5:8

- **God did not merely tell us that He loved us; He demonstrated it.**

- Jesus loved us:
 - While we were still sinners.
 - Before we deserved it.
 - Before we changed.
 - When we had nothing to offer Him.
- The cross is the greatest demonstration of love the world has ever seen.

Illustration: The Firefighter

- Picture a firefighter running into a burning building to rescue a stranger.
- The firefighter:
 - Moves toward the danger while everyone else is running away.
 - Risks his own life to save someone who cannot save himself.
 - Does not stop to ask whether the person deserves to be rescued.
- Jesus did even more for us.
 - He entered our brokenness.
 - He took our sin upon Himself.
 - He gave His life so we could be saved.
- Ask yourself:
 - Do I truly understand how deeply Jesus loves me?
 - Has His love changed how I treat other people?
 - Am I willing to love someone who cannot repay me?
- Sacrificial love may look like:
 - Giving your time when it is inconvenient.
 - Helping someone without receiving recognition.
 - Forgiving someone who has hurt you.
 - Being present for someone who feels alone.
 - Meeting a need without being asked.

Key Truth

- **Jesus did not wait for us to become worthy of His love.**

- He loved us at our worst and gave His life for us.
- When we understand His love, we become capable of loving others selflessly.

2. Jesus Gives Us an Example to Follow

Scripture: John 13:15

“I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”

- Jesus did not simply tell people how to live.
 - He demonstrated humility.
 - He served people.
 - He showed compassion.
 - He welcomed the rejected.
 - He forgave His enemies.
 - He put the needs of others ahead of Himself.
- Following Jesus means more than believing in Him.
 - It means becoming like Him.
 - It means living the way He lived.
 - It means treating people the way He treated them.

Illustration: The Mentor

- Think about a mentor or role model who influenced your life.
- Their example probably affected:
 - The way you think.
 - The decisions you make.
 - The way you treat others.
 - The person you are becoming.
- Jesus is more than an inspiring role model—He is our perfect example.
- If we want to know how to live, serve, forgive, and love, we must look at Jesus.
- Choose one characteristic of Jesus to practice this week:
 - **Humility:** Put someone else’s needs ahead of your own.
 - **Service:** Do something helpful without being asked.
 - **Compassion:** Notice someone who is hurting and respond.
 - **Patience:** Give grace to someone who frustrates you.
 - **Forgiveness:** Release bitterness and extend mercy.
 - **Generosity:** Use what God has given you to bless someone else.

Key Truth

- People should not only hear us talk about Jesus.

- They should be able to see Jesus through the way we live.
- Our lives should make His love visible.

3. Jesus Must Be the Center

Scripture: Colossians 1:18

“And he is the head of the body, the church...so that in everything he might have the supremacy.”

- Jesus is not simply one part of the church.
 - He is the head of the church.
 - He is the foundation of our faith.
 - He is the reason we gather.
 - He is the center of everything we do.
- A church can have:
 - Great music.
 - Beautiful facilities.
 - Strong programs.
 - Talented leaders.
 - Exciting events.
- But if Jesus is not at the center, we have missed the entire purpose.

Illustration: The Wheel

- Picture a wheel with spokes extending from its center.
- When the center is strong:
 - The spokes stay connected.
 - The wheel remains balanced.
 - Everything moves together.
- When the center is damaged or removed:
 - The spokes become disconnected.
 - The wheel loses its strength.
 - Everything eventually collapses.
- Jesus is the center that holds everything together.
 - When He is at the center of our families, we find direction.
 - When He is at the center of our decisions, we find wisdom.
 - When He is at the center of our church, we find unity and purpose.
- Ask yourself:
 - Is Jesus truly at the center of my life?

- Does He guide my decisions?
- Does He have control of my relationships?
- Is He first in my schedule, finances, and priorities?
- Are there areas I have not surrendered to Him?
- Make Jesus central by:
 - Spending intentional time in prayer.
 - Reading and obeying God's Word.
 - Worshiping Him consistently.
 - Seeking His will before making decisions.
 - Removing distractions that compete for first place.
 - Serving faithfully in His church.

Key Truth

- Jesus does not want to be added to the edge of our lives.
- He deserves to be at the center of everything.
- When Jesus is in His rightful place, everything else begins to find its proper place.

Conclusion: Jesus Is the Reason

- Jesus is the reason we can love others.
- Jesus is the reason every person has value.
- Jesus demonstrated sacrificial love.
- Jesus gave us a perfect example to follow.
- Jesus is the head and center of His church.
- If we truly love our church, then we must be a church that:
 - Keeps Jesus at the center.
 - Loves like Jesus.
 - Serves like Jesus.
 - Forgives like Jesus.
 - Welcomes people like Jesus.
 - Points the world to Jesus.

Call to Action

This week:

- **Reflect on His love.**
 - Remember what Jesus did for you at the cross.
- **Follow His example.**

- Choose one characteristic of Jesus and intentionally live it out.
- **Make Him the center.**
 - Give Jesus control of every area of your life.
- **Share His love.**
 - Find one person you can encourage, serve, forgive, or help.

Final Challenge: Let's become a church that does more than talk about Jesus. Let's reflect His heart, demonstrate His love, and keep Him at the center of everything we do—because **Jesus matters**.