

Basic Instructions (The Greatest Commandment) • Matthew 22:34-40 Chris Cahill – Children’s Pastor -The Bridge Church Venice – Sunday, March 31, 2019

Hello Friends! I am Chris Cahill, your Children’s Pastor. First, I would like to thank Reggie Joiner and his book A New Kind of Leader as well as Orange Curriculum for their influence on today’s message. Yellow + Red = Orange

What a privilege to be here with you today and have the opportunity to present our Bridge Kids Ministry to you and have a shared experience with our kids. Like the **Lorax** who speaks for the trees, I speak for the **kids!**

Because I believe... Kids are people... and...

Kids Matter!

In my talk today, my hope is that God inspires you to move to affect life change.

Let’s pray... God please use me today to convey what you want our church to hear. Thank you for your amazing love and grace. Thank you for making all of us on purpose, for a purpose. In Jesus Name Amen!

SETTING UP THE STORY

Our Theme this month has been MADE BY GOD!

All month in Bridge Kids we’ve been talking about **Individuality**—about discovering who you are meant to be.

This month we learned:

Wk 1 God Made you in His image -That all starts with knowing that God MADE you. He made you in His image. Originally, He made Adam and Eve Perfect, but it didn’t stay that way! They disobeyed God by eating the Fruit. In spite of that, even though we all mess up and sin, we still have value! Genesis 1:26-27.

Wk 2 God wants to have a relationship with you– That’s why He sent Jesus! The Lost Sheep – Luke 15:1-7

Wk 3 God made you to make a difference – With God’s help, you can change the world around you right now - Like He used Timothy’s experiences, gifts and talents to make a difference – 1Timothy 4:12

Wk 4 God wants you to see what really matters – God doesn’t look at our appearance or what we have- what matters is what’s on the inside! God chose David to be King because of what was in his heart – 1Samuel 16:7

He made you unique and special! And that’s not all. He wants you to see the value in others, too.

“Jesus made that crystal clear one time when He was teaching a large crowd of people. (Hold up Bible.)

A religious leader asked Jesus a question he thought would make Jesus look bad in front of everyone.

You see, the religious leaders thought Jesus wasn’t who He said He was: the Son of God. So they tried to turn the people against Jesus by tricking Him into saying something the people wouldn’t like. But, of course, Jesus really is the Son of God, and tricking Him was impossible.

“Here’s the tough question the leader asked Jesus.

Matthew 22:36 read:

“Teacher,” he asked, “which is the most important commandment in the Law?”

“Let me explain why this was such a tough question to answer. Way back in the Old Testament, before Jesus came to the world, God gave His people laws they were supposed to obey.

Pick up the scroll and unroll it far enough so it’s about the size of a regular piece of paper. Show the scribbled writing side.

“How many laws do you think the people were supposed to follow? (Pause for some responses.) Those are some good guesses. There were actually 613 laws the people were supposed to obey.

Let go of the bottom dowel so the scroll unrolls onto the ground.

“That’s a lot of rules! The religious leader asked Jesus which of those 613 laws was the most important. It seemed like an impossible question!

“But it wasn’t impossible for Jesus. He quoted something that Moses had told God’s people long ago.

Matthew 22:37 read

“Jesus replied, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your mind.’

“Jesus said the most important commandment was to love God more than anything else—more than our favorite toy, our pets, our friends, even our families. And Jesus didn’t stop there. He also said something else that God had told Moses long ago. Let’s go back and read all of what Jesus said.

Matthew 22:37-38 read

“Jesus replied, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your mind.’ This is the first and most important commandment.”

Matthew 22:39-40 read

“And the second is like it. ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’ Everything that is written in the Law and the Prophets is based on these two commandments.”

“In other words, Jesus said that the most important thing we can do is to love God and love people. All the other rules and laws God gave His people are based on those two things.

“Jesus made it clear: our job is to love God and to love others. We can show how much we love God by showing love to the people He’s made.

“One thing is for sure: we were ALL made to love others. Every person has value. Every person was made in the image of God. As you continue to discover who you’re meant to be, remember what Jesus said is most important: loving God and loving others.

How do you think you could use the unique way God made YOU to help someone else? That’s a really good question. It’s something you can talk about with your parents and small group leaders for sure. Kids can talk about it with your parents, too.

“So what does it really look like to love God and love others?

1. Write a letter to a friend and put it in the mailbox
2. Draw a picture and mail it to your teacher to tell them you miss them and are thankful for them.
3. Do some yard work for a neighbor.
4. Make a get well box for someone who is sick.
5. Listen without interrupting or arguing back.
6. Help your parents make a meal for a family that just had a baby.
7. Take turns cleaning your brother or sister’s room.
8. Invite friends to Power Up Extreme Week July 22-26.

It’s putting others before yourself. It is treating others the way you like to be treated. It’s our Basic Instructions! Love God Love People
Everything we do hangs on this the 2 Greatest Commandments!

1 Corinthians 13:1- 3

If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn’t love others, I would only be a noisy gong or clanging cymbal. If I had the gift of prophesy, and if I understood all God’s secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn’t love others, I would be nothing. If I gave everything

I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.

Everything in the world hangs on love, and more specifically...
Everything in the world hangs on Loving God and Loving People

To the Grownups in the room...Would you agree with me that some things matter more than others?

What if we took the 2nd greatest commandment and focused on loving people by loving kids?

Probably everyone in this room would agree with this statement:

Loving Kids Matters!

Invite a small child to the stage

When Jesus was asked by his disciples: "Who is the greatest is the Kingdom of Heaven?" He called a little child and had him stand up among them and said:

Matthew 18:3

"I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

Matthew 18:4

"Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven."

Now listen to this...

Matthew 18:5

"And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me."

In other words, if you don't want to miss God, pay attention to the kids around you!

The kids in your house, neighborhood, church, city, schools..

Could I be so bold as to take it a step further? At the risk of becoming controversial...

Loving Kids Matters more than Loving Adults!

Before you decide to throw a tomato at me and leave...

Even the family dog figures this out when a new baby arrives at the house..

Here's what I am not saying..

I am not attempting to devalue any human at any stage of life.

I am not saying that the value of an adult's life is less than the value of a kid's life.

I am not saying that the world in any way should revolve around a child.
I am not saying other ministries of the church are not important!

What I am saying...

If you want to affect the way a generation sees the world...
Start lovingly influencing their character and faith when they are young.

What you do for kids matters more than what you do for adults.

The more we start investing in coaching, teaching, training kids, the more impact it will make in their life later.

Every expert agrees...

The first 18 years of a persons life are extremely crucial to laying a foundation for their future!

In fact Social Scientist George Barna's data in the book Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions shows that what a child believes by the age of 13 is essentially what they will one day die believing.

Sue Gerhardt a researcher on emotional health in children in her book Why Love Matters says:

"The brain of a child is built up by actual experiences. What you put in is more or less what you get out."

In other words, What goes into a mind, flows into a heart and ultimately comes out in a life.

What you do for a kid is like investing, it gains shares. The sooner you start paying in the greater the return later. The longer you wait, the less you earn.

Making deposits in someone's life while they are young, will earn more interest over time.

Pick up backpack

- Imagine waiting until a child is an adult to teach them to read.
- Parents who want their kids to become educated adults, enroll their kids in school.
- What if you waited until a child became an adult to begin teaching healthy habits.
- What happens in a child's life today will be the things they carry with them for the rest of their life.
- Common sense laws mandate enrolling kids in school.

Why? Because what happens to kids matters more.

Make no mistake, I am saying that:

What you do for kids and teenagers is more important than what you do for adults.

I believe that what our church does for kids will make adults better Christians.

When adults show up in Children's Ministry, something happens to the adult...

- Kids remind us what really matters
- Kids stretch our faith
- Kids give us an opportunity to demonstrate unconditional love

How we love kids will change how they see God

You may not realize on this side of Heaven the impact you have by lovingly investing in the life of a child. But I fully expect that 100 years from now, in Heaven, you will be tapped on the shoulder by people who say, "thank you for loving me when I was a kid!"

You may be the best chance some kids have to see God.

Our church has recently come through a season, that in its wake, it has left our Children's Ministry grossly understaffed.

Let's pretend for a moment that I was the senior pastor of our church..

I might say, "no one can volunteer in any ministry, until we have enough leaders for kids and teenagers!"

- If you are not volunteering in your church, START
- If you are volunteering some, consider volunteering MORE (it will change you more than them)
- If you are volunteering a lot, go FIND SOMEONE ELSE to volunteer.
- **Testimony Video: Anthony Aleo, Laurie Worth, and Matt Brannon**
"Mr. Anthony and Ms. Laurie and Mr. Matt would never trade the experiences they've had loving kids. Because that's the very BEST thing we can do with our lives: loving God and loving people through Children's Ministry.

Move from the stage to the kids

Don't miss it...

When there was some adult ministry discussion happening and parents tried to interrupt in order to get their kids to Jesus, the disciples got it wrong and when they

rebuked the parents, attempting to send them away so that they could continue adulterating... Jesus saw this and was indignant (irate, outraged, annoyed) stating:

Mark 10:14b

"Let the Little Children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

Mark 10:15

"I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

Mark 10:16

"And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them."

I believe Jesus demonstrated clearly that loving Kids Matter the most!

"Remember this:

Bottom Line Slide

"God made me to love others."

"Let's pray and ask God to help us see how we can do that, too."

Blank Bottom Line Slide Music

Pray

"God, thanks for these great stories where we can clearly see how You used people in the lives of others. We know You made us all to love the people around us. We know we can make a difference by **[Basic Truth] treating others the way we want to be treated**. Please help us to know what that could look like for each one of us. Thank You for making us in Your image and loving us. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name, amen."

Sarah enters as Chris exits.



Basic Instructions Sermon Discussion Questions from March 31, 2019

1. Do you believe Chris Cahill's opening jokes were funny? Why or why not?
2. What do you think of Chris's hat selection Sunday? Any suggestions?

Read Matthew 22:34-40.

3. Define the greatest commandment and its implications.
4. Give an example of the greatest commandment from your life.
5. How could obeying the greatest commandment make a difference?
6. What does it look like to love God?
7. What does it look like to love others?

8. How can loving God make a difference?
9. How can loving others make a difference?
10. Imagine a world where everyone seeks to make a difference in someone else's life every day. Describe that world and compare it to the world we actually live in?
11. When is it easiest to love others? How about when it's hardest?
12. How can you show love to people when it's difficult?

Read Matthew 22:37-39.

13. What does it mean to love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind?
14. When we love others, whose image are we reflecting?
15. How has God uniquely wired you to reflect Him to others?

Read 1Corinthians 13:1-3

16. Finish the sentence, Love is . . .
17. How do you know someone loves you?
18. What is your spouse's love language?
19. How does your spouse know you love him or her?
20. Share a time when you have been off track with the busyness of life and missed demonstrating love to others.
21. Do you believe the statement "Loving Kids Matters more than Loving Adults"? Why or why not?

Read Mark 10:13-16

22. Why do you think the disciples wanted to keep the children away from Jesus?
23. Are there times when we adults have the same attitude as the disciples?
24. Why do you think Jesus became irate at the disciples?
25. What do you believe Jesus' attitude is towards children?
26. Do you believe Jesus' attitude demonstrated that kids are a top priority?
27. How can we demonstrate that the next generation is a priority in our church?