

12-17-2016, COTR Texarkana

Title: Loving the Unlovable, pt-2

Purpose: Provoke people to love unlovable people like Jesus did.

Spiritual Truth: Jesus loved the unlovable; so, will I.

Text: Mark 12: 28-31

Topic: Love, Rejection, Distress, Failure

Series: The Power of Love

Series Purpose: Provoke people to demonstrate the love of God in hate filled world.

Loving the Unlovable, pt-2

I. Introduction

- A. Review series, “The Power of Love”. How we can respond to the hatred in America.
 - 1. Listen to live stream @ChurchOnTheRock.org or the COTR iPhone/ Android app
 - 2. Mark 12:28–31 (ESV) one of the scribes...asked him (Jesus), “Which commandment is the most important of all?” 29 Jesus answered...30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart...soul...mind and...strength.’ 31 The second is this: ‘**You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”
 - 3. Love has an inherent power to change people. God’s love for me changed me; my love for people changes them and me. In my last message, we talked about “Loving the Unlovable”. We saw how Jesus loved people who are hard to love.
- B. Today’s message will continue, “Loving the Unlovable- pt-2”. (1) Jesus loved people who were rejected (2) Jesus loved people in distress. (3) Jesus loved people who failed.
 - A. Purpose: Provoke people to love unlovable people like Jesus did.
 - C. Spiritual Truth: Jesus loved the unlovable; so, will I.

II. Jesus loved people who were rejected.

- A. Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath John 9 (NLT) 13 Then they took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees...18 The Jewish leaders still refused to believe the man had been blind and could now see, so they called in his parents. 19 They asked them... Was he born blind? If so, how can he now see?” 20 His parents replied, “We know...that he was born blind, 21 but we don’t know...who healed him. Ask him. He is old enough to speak for himself.” 22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who had announced that anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be **expelled from the synagogue...**
 - 1. Jewish life revolved around the synagogue. Excommunication meant no attendance at religious services and no interaction with other Jews. His parents didn’t want to be rejected so they let their son face it alone. I wonder if he felt rejected/abandoned?
- B. Verse 24 So for the second time they called in the man who had been blind ...34... And they threw him out of the synagogue. 35 **When Jesus heard what had happened, he found the man** and asked, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ...38 “Yes, Lord, I believe!” the man said. And he worshiped Jesus.

- C. Def. rejected: someone that's not wanted, doesn't fit in, don't meet the requirements so they're excluded or thrown away.
 - 1. People are rejected for lots of reasons, e.g. they're not good enough to make the team (movie "Rudy"), they don't wear the right clothes, they're not what we wanted in a spouse, they don't speak English, they're poor, their skin color is different, they didn't go to the right school...
 - 2. All of us know the pain of rejection. Rejection hurts. E.g. Clint Eastwood movie, "Trouble with Curve". He was a professional baseball scout; his wife died and he sent his daughter to live with her uncle. She spent the rest of her life in therapy and pursued a career dad wanted because she felt rejected and wanted his approval.
 - D. Jesus loved people others rejected; He went looking for the blind man who was rejected by family and religious leaders.
 - 1. It's hard to love a person excluded by your group, e.g. movie "42", Jackie Robinson, black/ white issues, SS put arm around Jackie in front of hometown.
 - 2. Something redemptive can happen when we love people who have been rejected.
- III. Jesus loved people in distress, i.e. people in serious trouble, hardship or suffering. He comforted them, met their needs and eased their suffering.
- A. Matthew 9:35–36 (NLT) Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area... announcing the Good News about the Kingdom...36 When he saw the crowds, **he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless**, (ESV harassed, NCV hurting, MSG aimless) like sheep without a shepherd.
 - 1. Some were poor, some sick, some were all alone, some were paralyzed by fear of the future, some were hounded by creditors. They were all in trouble and Jesus had compassion on them. He helped them; this is what it means to love your neighbor. You don't have to have a Bible school degree to help people in trouble. You just have to be willing to care and do what you can to help.
 - B. Jesus notices when we help people in trouble. Matthew 25:31–40 (NLT) "But when the Son of Man comes in his glory...he will sit upon his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people..." "Then the King will say to those on his right...inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry, and **you fed me**. I was thirsty, and **you gave me a drink**. I was a stranger, and **you invited me into your home**. 36 I was naked, and **you gave me clothing**. I was sick, and **you cared for me**. I was in prison, and **you visited me.**" 37 "Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty ... 38 Or...show you hospitality? Or...give you clothing? 39 When did we ever see you sick or in prison...40 "And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, **when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!**'"
 - 1. Pictures: LaNell and team going to Mexico in Jan. with shoes and clothes in a garbage dump. People in distress may be unlovable. They may be dirty and smell. Their situation may make us uncomfortable...love them anyway. It's what Jesus did
- IV. Jesus loved people who had failed.

A. Matthew 26:33–35 (NLT) Peter declared, “Even if everyone else deserts you, I will never desert you.” 34 Jesus replied...Peter—this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me.” 35 “No!” Peter insisted. “Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you!”...26:73–75 (NLT) A little later some of the other bystanders came over to Peter and said, “You must be one of them; we can tell by your Galilean accent.” 74 Peter swore...I don’t know the man!... 75 Suddenly, Jesus’ words flashed through Peter’s mind: “Before the rooster crows, you will deny three times that you even know me.” And **he went away, weeping bitterly.**

1. Peter is one of the biggest failures in recorded history. When we fail, we feel like quitting and if nobody is there to encourage us to try again many do quit. E.g. movie “The Natural”, a childhood sweetheart came to see Robert Redford in a slump after 10 years. He asked her why. She said, “I didn’t want to see you fail.”
2. Failures need someone to help them get back up, not push them down.

B. Mark 16:7 (NLT) Now go and tell his disciples, **including Peter**, that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died.” It was Peter who preached at Pentecost when the church was born and 3000 were saved.

1. Jesus didn’t throw Peter away when we failed. He redeemed him, i.e. He gave him another chance. E.g. movie, “Remember the Titans”. Petie missed a block and Denzel took him out of the game. The defensive coach put him in as cornerback and he stopped the offense cold.
2. God doesn’t throw us away when we fail. We should treat others the same way.

V. Conclusion: Video of a COTR family

A. Summary: Jesus showed us how to love people who were rejected, people in trouble and people who had failed. I’ve seen a family in our church do this and I want you to hear their story. TJ and Marsha Geracie became guardians to a 14-year-old boy named Jurman. Marsha is a schoolteacher and he’s a former student whose mom died. He was in trouble and they showed incredible love.

1. Loving the unlovable, loving our neighbor...it’s what Jesus told us to do.

VI. Response

A. Prayer

B. Souls: God’s love for us. Romans 5:8 (NCV) But God shows his great love for us in this way: **Christ died for us while we were still sinners.**

C. *** *Logos Bible Software and library were used to prepare this message.*