

LOVE Overcomes March 10, 2024
#belikejesus

Introduction - Review

The Why

Frank: God loves us unconditionally, w/out expectation, w/out an “and” or an “if.” Why do we need to love others? Extend His love?

Christian: *This is something people actually wrestle with a lot. If God’s love is unconditional, why is it then that I am “called” or “commanded” to love others and share God’s love - invite others into God’s love?*

When we experience God’s love it changes our perspective about everything.

**Perspective – The Pointillists (Seurat, Matisse, Van Gogh, etc.)*

Frank: But why? I don’t want to. I am selfish!!!

Christian: *I also think in the American church that this idea of focusing on myself and my walk; and then someday I’ll be ready to help others has some really weird...and negative effects. We see this on campus all the time with Christians on campus and we call it “spiritual gluttony.”*

“spiritual gluttony”

Matthew 16:25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Acts 20:35b ... Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’

Christian: brief follow-up comment

Frank: “I’m not ready!” When is the right time? Mature in Christ first? Growing in his love? The right time to share this love?

Christian: *To be honest, once we receive the love of God, there is no better time to share the love of God than now, immediately... it’s better for us... for others... let me explain.*

Let’s look at this example in Jesus’ ministry.

Retell the Samaritan Woman Story... Close w/ sharing the result:

John 4:39-42 - Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, “He told me all that I ever did.’
40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay w/ them, & he stayed there two days. 41 And many more believed because of his word. 42 They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we’ve heard for ourselves, & we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”

This woman didn’t know anything, & the theology she did know was probably wrong, but she told people about Jesus & what he did for her. The acceptance & invitation he gave her. The forgiveness & this town could see her immediately changed life.

The Struggle

Frank: It’s really hard to get out there & represent Jesus. We live in a part of the country that is really turned off to Jesus & the church. Why is that? Why is the world so opposed to us sharing this message? Why is it so hard to share the love of God?

Christian: - *There are so many reasons. Ultimately, we need to remember we are in spiritual battle, and we have spiritual forces in the world and sin in our own hearts that want to*

Lesslie Newbigin comments that our current age has relegated spirituality to the private sphere of life.

Facts vs. Values (Public vs Private) Faith is not allowed in public. Or it doesn't carry any authority.

There's a spiritual battle in our world/culture. The ways people discover God & are invited to the love Christ are being distorted

Three Battlefields:

A) Truth - *There is truth & truth should be/can be discovered*

John 8:32 - "you will know the truth, & the truth will set you free."

B) Relationships - *Love for others is admirable and shows a truth in character and is praiseworthy.*

Example - Relationships Magazine

C) Awe – *Experience God in nature or a child...*

Philippians 4:8 - Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

**Example – Batman vs. Ironman*

Result of all of this: Apathy to the invitation of God.

****Picture of the pigeon on campus****

Describe the Image of a person anxious, hurting, feeling isolated, confused about their purpose in life, unclear about direction and without being able to really identify or name what's wrong says I don't feel good, so "let's just turn on the tv and try to distract myself through this life."

The Invitation

Frank: "Now that we're all thoroughly depressed..." Let's discuss the importance of sharing God's love w/ our family, neighbors & community. They need it. We have it. What are your thoughts about these apathetic people? How are we supposed to share God's love w/ those not interested, in a way that they'll receive it?

Christian: You know I think it could be as simple as my experience with avocados.

**Example - Avocados Story*

We need to... with our words and actions... to demonstrate the love of God... putting Jesus' invitation on display.

1 Peter 2:12 - *Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*

Romans 2:4b *...God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance*

**Example - My family - washing the dishes*

We're called to share Christ through "brute force love." I don't care, you don't have a choice. I'm loving you & you don't have a choice. This is what we're called to... to creatively & uncompromising love... just like Jesus did when he died for us. It's brute force love that will lead people to repentance.

Frank: We are going to “love the hell” out of people. People are nervous about needing to do “apologetics,” but sharing Jesus’ love is simple; showing love & doing it in the name of Jesus.

Example - inviting Student story over to my house

We need to give people new Christ encounters. Many students that I’ve encountered aren’t interested in Jesus because they’ve had negative impressions w/ Christians/churches, there are other religions telling people who God is, the internet spreading misinformation. But we need to show people Jesus. They need to see Jesus. They need to taste to experience the love of God & his invitation... through us, through our kindness.

Frank: Comment on the testimony. Close out the service w/ either practical tips or a challenge.