

Uncomfortable Love

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Destructive emotions that disguise themselves as virtues.

My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back,²⁰ remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins. James 5:19-20

Care doesn't always feel caring. Love doesn't always feel loving.

"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over." Matthew 18:15

You're not the boss of us...

- Fear, Discomfort and Apprehension
- Indifference: a lack of concern where there should be concern.

Love says, "I'm gonna do what I need to do for the sake of this other person, even though it doesn't feel good to me right now."

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"² He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them.³ And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 18:1-3

"If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.⁷ Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to stumble! Such things must come, but woe to the person through whom they come! Matthew 18:6-7

How big of a deal is this?

If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire.⁹ And if your eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell. Matthew 18:8-9

Love forbids us from minding our own business when someone else's business needs a bit of minding.

"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.¹⁶ But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'¹⁷ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector. Matthew 18:15-17

Love is not silent.

Love speaks up.

Let's Connect

- When presented with a difficult situation, do you tend to dive right in or get as far away as possible?

Let's Talk About It

Sometimes the people closest to us are the ones who see the mistakes we're about to make—mistakes that could be avoided if only they said something. Care doesn't always feel caring. Love doesn't always feel loving. So how do we speak up when there's something worth saying? We refuse to allow fear, discomfort, apprehension and indifference to be the boss. Because love forbids us from minding our own business when someone else's business needs a bit of minding.

Proverbs 4:23; James 5:19-20; Matthew 18:1-17

- Which part of the message made an impact, caught your attention, or challenged you?
- Read James 5:19-20. Why do we tend to avoid difficult conversations? What are some of the things that hinder you from speaking up when something needs to be said?
- Read Matthew 18:6-9. Describe a time when loving someone you care about didn't feel like love at all. What did you say? What did you do? How did it go?
- Read Matthew 18:15-17. Has someone ever taken a big risk by confronting you about something? If so, how did it go? Who have you given permission to speak into your life?
- Is there someone in your life right now who needs to hear from you? How could you prepare for this difficult conversation? How can this group support you?

Take a Step

- Consider how fear, discomfort, apprehension and indifference may be holding you back from a conversation that needs to be had. What step can you take this week to not allow those emotions to be the boss of you?
- **SOAP reading:** **Day 1:** Isaiah 11-14, Hebrews 9; **Day 2:** Isaiah 15-18, Hebrews 10; **Day 3:** Isaiah 19-21, Hebrews 11; **Day 4:** Isaiah 22-24, Hebrews 12; **Day 5:** Isaiah 25-28, Hebrews 13; **Day 6:** Isaiah 29-31, James 1; **Day 7:** Isaiah 32-35, James 2

Here's My Prayer

Thank you, Jesus, that fear, discomfort, apprehension and indifference don't have to be the boss of me. Father, thank You for never giving up on me when I make mistakes and poor choices. Make my heart tender and teachable. Give me ears to hear correction from You and from others. Supply me with the courage and strength I need to have difficult conversations when needed. In Jesus' name, amen.