



Hard Sayings of Jesus

Lesson 9: Unless You Hate Your Father and Mother...

Opening Prayer

Introduction

- 1.) What are the different kinds of love?
- 2.) What do you consider the biblical definition of *love*?
- 3.) What words did Jesus use to teach his disciples about how important it is to love each other?

Studying God's Word

Jesus was all about love. He came as the agent of the Father's love and was willing to sacrifice his own life to give us peace with God. The most beautiful statements and teachings about love—recognized as wonderful and encouraging by Christians and even non-Christians alike—are found in the words of Christ. But sometimes, he doesn't sound so loving.

Luke 14:25-26 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple."

- 1.) List as many things as possible that make these words of Jesus *hard* to hear and understand.
- 2.) Context helps us understand how these words are to be understood. In the previous verses Jesus had told the Parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:16-24). What is the common theme in that parable? What sin is Jesus addressing?
- 3.) Why is it NOT possible that Jesus is actually calling us to *hate* our families?

Matthew 5:21-22 "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' ²² But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment."

1 John 3:15 Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.

Matthew 10:34-39 ³⁴ “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to turn ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— ³⁶ a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’ ³⁷ Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸ and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

4.) This isn’t a true parallel passage to the Luke account, but it does address the same instruction. How do Jesus’ words in Matthew help you understand what he means in Luke by “hating” your family?

5.) Agree or disagree (and why?): Jesus’ words in Luke are a hyperbole (excessive exaggeration).

6.) Agree or disagree (and why?): Understanding that Jesus isn’t calling on us to literally hate our families makes these words easier to accept.

7.) Give some examples of how did Jesus put his own words into practice?

8.) Imagine some scenarios where you would see a Christian put this command of Jesus into practice.

9.) What might it look like when people put their family before Jesus? And how is that a danger to our faith?

10.) What is the connection between the passages we’ve studied tonight and the First Commandment? Why does God want us to fear, love, and trust him above all things—even our families, even ourselves?

11.) Consider your own schedule, your budget, and your relationships. Are there any things that are taking priority over your relationship with God? What would Jesus call you to adjust and correct?

Summary

- Jesus does want us to love all people.
- Because Jesus loves our families and us, he doesn’t want anything to come between him and us.
- To hold on to Christ’s love, we need to be ready to let go of anything that comes between him and us.

Prayer