



Week 7: NOW WHAT?

INTRODUCTION – Jesus Is Lord, Eh?

1 John 2:6; 4:17

DINE IN – Making the Case Clear

- 1) The way of enemy love (enemy kindness/serving/doing good for) is the heart of God.
Matthew 5:44-45; Romans 5:8, 10
- 2) Jesus calls us to love the way he loves.
John 15:12-14; 1 John 3:16; Philippians 2:5-8
- 3) The way of the cross is fundamental to Christian discipleship.
Matthew 10:37-39; 16:24-26; Mark 8:34-38; Luke 9:23-24; 14:27
- 4) Jesus teaches enemy love in explicit and practical terms. **Matthew 5 // Luke 6**
- 5) Jesus models enemy love throughout his life and death.
- 6) The Apostles taught and modelled enemy love, to death.
- 7) The Apostles taught that, when it comes to violence, the role of Christians and the role of government are distinct and that we should draw the line at paying our taxes.
Romans 12:14-13:7
- 8) Early church leaders unanimously taught and modelled pacifism, enemy love, and non-involvement in institutions of violence.
- 9) Not until Constantine (4th Century) did the church embrace Christian participation in violence.
- 10) Anabaptists called and still call Christians to follow Christ's way of peace, enemy love, and reconciliation.
- 11) Biblical objections raised tend to be examples of non-Christocentric Bible reading, exegesis of desperation, (un)intentional misunderstandings, sound-bite theology, or arguments from silence.
- 12) Experiential objections raised tend to follow the standard wisdom of our world rather than the counter-wisdom of God. They may qualify us to be decent Canadians, but not obedient Christians. **1 Corinthians 1:18-31; 2:13-14; 3:18-20**

The goal of a Christ-follower is not to be what the world calls a "good" person, but what is so off the charts of human moral categories that non-Christians would have no easy word to describe you (except maybe "crazy"). Jesus doesn't want you to live a good life. He wants you to live a loving life.

TAKE OUT – Advancing In Enemy Love

- **WHEN SOMEONE HATES YOU...**
 1. Assess your own life first.
 - a. Remove planks before splinters.
 - b. Be humble in your disposition.
 - c. Apologize if possible.
 - d. Do this personally, racially, nationally, religiously, etc.
 2. See them as God sees them.
 - a. Infinitely valuable – worth dying for.
 - b. Dearly loved.
 - c. Image of God is primary identity.
 - d. Broken in need of repair, sick in need of healing, enslaved in need of rescue, sinful in need of salvation.
 - e. Relate to the good in them, while confronting the bad.

3. Serve their needs (not their wants).
 - a. Offer opportunities of enlightenment through practical deeds of loving service.
 - b. Let all actions arise out of your genuine Christ-like love, not your need for self-preservation or punishment (especially when you are in a position to defeat or shame or overpower that person).
 - c. Trust God to avenge injustice (directly or through the state).
- **WHEN SOMEONE HURTS YOU...**
 1. Don't confuse love with sentimentality (which can lead to enabling).
 2. Practice caring confrontation.
 3. Remember love is an active commitment to help others become who they were made to be. (**Matthew 18:15-17; Luke 17:3-4**)
- **WHEN YOU HAVE HURT SOMEONE...**
 1. Put aside everything else, including your religious commitments, in order to prioritize reconciliation.
 2. Don't delay or you may get too comfortable merely thinking about what is right and not acting on it. We must fight against the human tendency to confuse good intentions and good ideas with good actions. (**Matthew 5:23-26**)
- **WHEN SOMEONE IS HURTING...**
 1. Never settle for being nice when you can be loving.
 2. Initiate relationship with those on the fringe of social circles.
 3. Volunteer with compassion organizations – talk to your Lead Pastor or Home Church Elder if you need ideas. (**Matthew 25:31-46; James 1:27**)
- **WHEN SOMEONE IS HURTING SOMEONE ELSE...**
 1. Never use pacifism as an excuse to be passive.
 2. Practice peaceful intervention.
 3. Go to war...as an agent of reconciliation. (See www.cpt.org)

CONCLUSION – Church History in Brief

Revelation 2:2-5

For Further Research...

- *Christian Peacemaker Teams...* www.cpt.org // *Getting In The Way: Stories From Christian Peacemaker Teams*, by Tricia Gates Brown // *Just Peacemaking: The New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War*, by Glen Stassen

Q & Eh? Text 647.330.2789 or email ask@themeetinghouse.ca

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS

Warming Up...

1. Congratulations on making it to the end! What are some highlights, positive or negative, about this series for you? In what ways has your thinking been challenged, altered, or reinforced on the subject of peace-making and enemy-love?

Look to the Book...

2. Read **1 Corinthians 1:18-31**. A) What verse or idea stands out to you the most? Why? B) Talk about how the "word of the cross" would be especially foolish within a first-century Jewish worldview, where their expectations of the Messiah were for him to be a conquering king. (Remember crucifixion was a sign of Roman victory.) C) From a materialist's worldview, why is pacifism a ridiculous philosophy? D) In what ways is the crucifixion of Christ: i) A unique unrepeatable event for our salvation? ii) A model for all Christ-followers to bring about the change God wants in this world?
3. Read **Mark 8:34-38**. Take 5 minutes to quietly, prayerfully meditate on these verses. Then share what you sense God is saying to you through Christ's words.

So What?...

4. Review the TAKE OUT section of your notes. Talk about specific relationships in your life where you need to take one, some, or all of these steps. Be specific about what shape your action might take – how, when, and where you intend to act.

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Notes are available online at themeetinghouse.ca/teaching