

# Radical Love: Getting to the Heart of the Gospel

## ✝ Jesus vs. Christians Video

### ✝ Introduction

- “The single greatest cause of atheism in the world is Christians who acknowledge Jesus with their lips but walk out the door and deny Him by their lifestyle. This is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable.” – Brenan Manning
- I think the reason that we fail to live out the gospel is that we have missed the heart of the gospel and the way that Jesus lived and in turn calls us to live. Tonight we will dive into what it means to be truly a Christ-follower.

### ✝ The Pictures (Matthew 5: 13-16):

- Jesus lays out in his first sermon two analogies of what it looks like to be a Christ-follower in our world. We will launch look into these word pictures given by Jesus and then practically expand that by looking at the way Jesus lived these out.
- Salt of the Earth (Matthew 5: 13):
  - Passages:
    - “You are the salt of the earth, but if the salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.”- Matthew 5: 13 ESV
    - Message Paraphrase- “Let me tell you why you are here. You’re here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You have lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage.” – Matthew 5:13
  - Explanation

- Salt makes an impact on food: Have you ever left the table at a restaurant and had someone dump the whole salt shaker in your drink? It made an impact that you definitely noticed that it was there.
- We are to have a way about us that brightens the spiritual taste buds of those around us.
- We are to live in a way that is attractive to others which causes us to be different not in just a positive light but in a godly way.
- Light of the World (Matthew 5: 14-16):
  - Passages
    - “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” – Matthew 5: 14-16 ESV
    - Message Paraphrase: “Here’s another way to put it: You’re here to be light, bringing out the God colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don’t think I am going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand – shine! Keep open house, be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up to God, this generous Father in heaven.” – Matthew 5: 14-16 Message
  - Explanation

- We have all been placed on a light-stand, or another way to look at it would be under a microscope, when our friends find out that we are Christ followers.
- Bug Illustration
  - Bugs are attracted to light due to its radiance.
  - “It’s so beautiful.” – Fly in *A Bugs Life* before it gets zapped in a bug zapper
  - Humans are attracted to light due to its beauty.
  - We look at the sun in wonder and awe at the beauty of a large flaming ball of light.
- Light naturally captivates the eyes and attention of the viewer.
- We need to be the ones illuminating our world with love, hope, and grace.

‡ What does living out a life like Jesus require?

- Shift in Priorities (Sermon on the Mount- Matthew 5: 1-12):
  - Background
    - Jesus is born and grows up. (Chapters 1-2)
    - Jesus goes and meets up with John the Baptist, the crazy prophet of the day and gets baptized by him. (Chapter 3)
    - Jesus has been baptized and the Holy Spirit descends on Him and God speaks to Him from heaven. (Chapter 3)
    - Jesus goes into the desert and is tempted for 40 days by Satan. (Chapter 4)
    - Jesus goes up to these fisherman and calls them to leave there nets and very lives behind to follow Him and they do it. (Chapter 4)
    - Jesus is just beginning to get a crowd following Him.

- Sermon on the Mount (**Matthew 5: 1-12**)
  - This is so counter-cultural for Jesus' audience just like it is for us today.
  - Jesus is not saying that the people who are on top in the eyes of the world are blessed. He is calling the downcast and outcasted people blessed.
  - Jesus is setting out His ministry and lifestyle being focused on the people that needed Him most. The people whose lives were totally lost. The people who were in a place of total desperation.
  - But Jesus did not just preach about it, He lived it!

#### ‡ Aspects of Living It Out in the Life of Jesus

##### ○ Displays of Love:

- Jesus and the Leper (Luke 5: 12-13)
  - “While He was on the way to one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and begged him, “Lord if you will, you can make me clean.” And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, “I will; be clean.” And immediately his leprosy left him.” Luke 5: 12-13 ESV
  - Jesus was willing to be interrupted from His busy life to take the time to display love to others.
    - How often do we let the business of our lives become an excuse to why we do not show the love of Jesus to people?
  - Jesus was willing to reach out and touch someone who society said was untouchable.
    - Which people in each of our lives need a touch of love and grace?



- “He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces, He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His stripes, we are healed.” – Isaiah 53: 3-5 ESV
- When we look at the ultimate display of love and grace on the cross for us, how can we not show grace and love to others around us?

#### ✝ Conclusion

- We are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus touching the world with His love and grace! We are to be Jesus in the world!
- Modern Day Example: Rachel Scott
  - “Rachel committed her life to the belief that each person, by reaching out to others in compassion and kindness could start a chain reaction that might change the world.”
  - Assembly
    - Testimony after testimony of students who were mocked and made outcasts sharing stories of how this classmate had been Jesus to them.
- Quote (Close Eyes and Let These Words Sink In Before I Pray- Pick a Phrase Out that Stands Out Where You Want to Be and We Will Pray that to God as We Close)
  - Note found written by a young pastor in Zimbabwe, Africa after his martyrdom for his faith in Jesus Christ “I’m part of the fellowship of the unashamed. I have Holy Spirit power. The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made – I’m a disciple of His. I won’t look back, let

up, slow down, back away, or be still. My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, and my future is secure. I'm finished and done with low living, sight walking, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tamed visions, worldly talking, cheap giving, and dwarfed goals. I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits, or popularity. I don't have to be right, first, tops, recognized, praised, regarded, or rewarded. I now live by faith, lean in his presence, walk by patience, am uplifted by prayer, and labor with power. My face is set, my gait is fast, my goal is heaven, my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions are few, my God is reliable, my mission is clear. I cannot be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away, turned back, deluded, or delayed. I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of the enemy, pander at the pool of popularity, or meander at the maze of mediocrity. I won't give up, shut up, let up, until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up, paid up, preached up for the cause of Christ. I am a disciple of Jesus. I must go till He comes, give till I drop, preach till all know, and work until He stops me. And, when He comes for His own, He will have no problem recognizing me...my banner will be clear."