

Greater Love...



Greater Love PART 2

So, the whole purpose of this message and I do hope you reference your Bibles, and one of the things you've noticed that I am doing now, and I do have versus for you, but I also go into the Bible, now—although I might not do that every Sunday, but I think you should have your Bible as it helps us cover a lot of basis.

Now, one of the reasons why I'm going through this series is because I need love to transform how we think. I need us to understand what the love of God is supposed to do AND does in our lives. Not only is it meant to make us feel good about ourselves, but it is supposed to transform us to becoming like love itself; (**who is love?**) God. God is love and Jesus is the embodiment of God's love.

- So, if we're going to become like Christ, we have to understand the love we have gotten. And I believe that if we have understood the love that God has for us, that's what frees our mind to be able to live the Christian life the way we're supposed to.

- So last week, I showed us that in order to love God, you had to love others and to love others, you had to learn to love yourself—and to love yourself means that you’ve received the love of God. And so,
- if you haven’t seen yourself from the perspective of God, you can’t see anybody else from God’s perspective. And if you can’t see anybody from God’s perspective, you can’t do to them what God would want you to do to them, therefore God does not consider what you’re doing to be love.

Now, someone actually sent me video of another individual talking about love; there were quite a bit of churches that spoke about love; it’s a theme going on in the realm of the spirit, we thank God for it, **(right?)**. But remember I told you guys this; now, the whole goal of our love **(right?)** is to love God; and to love God, we saw that you had to love Him with your heart, soul, and mind, **(right?)**.

- So, let me help you guys with this because one of the videos that was sent to me was quite interesting where somebody was saying, “no, you got to love God before you can love somebody else.” And then its’ like, okay, but that’s not the whole story, **(right?)** because **(I understand what the person was saying)**, and it’s very important because the video that was sent to me made me pause for a second.
- The goal of everything you do in Christianity the Bible says is do all things as unto **(who?)** God. In fact, the Bible says in whatever you do, if it is not done in faith, it is a sin. Every-single-thing we do, is out of our knowledge of who God is—“faith cometh by hearing and hearing the word of God.” But how we show love to God, is through obeying God. So, you cannot say that you love God if you don’t obey God, impossible.
- **(Why?)** because remember I showed you last week that the Bible says, none of us has seen God, so how can you say you love God IF, you don’t love other people? So yes, the first commandment is “love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind.

So, what does that mean?

That means that when you became a Christian, the process of becoming a Christian or converting, means that you saw the love of God. **(Are you with me?)**; if you say became a Christian, what you’re saying is “the love of God brought me here—He drew me in.” Sometimes we have to go through the process of understanding that love, but we can definitely feel it; we can see it...

- Now if that love is meant to change my heart, soul, and mind to wanting to love God, the intent is there **(right?)**. Now, but it doesn’t materialize into love until action is taken. And that’s the problem; I’ve been doing more marriage counseling now in my entire week than individual counseling’s, one of the things that I am seeing ... missing in the concept of Love—in fact, I’ve started to hear podcasts where pastors say this from the alter and it makes me cringe every time; here it is, **(are you ready?)**, “love is not enough anymore in marriage.”

How many of us have heard comments like that?

Love is not enough to hold the marriage down! You got to... then they'll tell you some few **(7)** steps to keep your marriage going; then they say LOVE it's not enough... That's when I want to go in the comment section, but I don't because my wife stops me. I'd be like, "**then you have no idea what love is; cause love is enough!**" 'The problem is love for You in your definition was something that was just done internally and it was a feeling; that's the problem with that definition of love'" Even the feeling is actually a byproduct of love. Love is actually a conscious decision a person makes; so, all of the sudden when God shows you His love, your heart, soul and mind carries a determination in it, to love God.

- But God only considers that you love Him when that determination actually becomes tangible. I cannot say "I love God, because faith without works is **(what?)** dead. The way we love God is to walk by faith, for faith is obeying what He said, **period!** So, I am a husband, I have a wife and I'm saying I love her, but if I don't show her that love, I'm lying... Let's say that I wake up every morning, "honey I love you, honey I love you, honey I love you," but there is no substantiation to my words; my words—my words are lies! In fact, Jesus knew this; so, when He says, Brethren, in other words, to love God, you have to obey Him and what is the closest thing to His heart? People. Therefore, it's to love other people. For example:

John 3:16

¹⁶For God so loved the world **(if the verse stopped there, it means absolutely nothing for us because God's love would not have done anything for us—let me repeat that.**

- If you said God loves me, you need to be able articulate that according to 2 Peter 3:15 that love, **(He says give a reason for that which you do believe, Peter says;)**. So, the verse does not stop there, John does something so beautiful in one sentence "God so loved the world," and then he says, "because He love the world—the way he proved he love the world," that **(He what?)**, Gave. **(Why?)** because love is not love if it's kept to yourself.

Can you see the problem with just loving yourself and not giving it up?

- You're not an embodiment of perfect love. Let's take that again, for **God so loved the world, that He gave**—so if I love, there must be action that is taken into it; so yes, some of us make that determination, "I love God in my heart" but the problem is that we don't know that part, that He gave...
- So, if you say you love God, it must be seen in what He gave; one of the things that John does that is so beautiful is he tell you what God gave, His only **(what?)**—this only is what makes the verse powerful, this word "only," that's what makes John 3:16 powerful. Let me give you an example, if you had, well, let's say you have two cars; it's easier to give one away because you have another.

- If you have one car—I can give it, but what do I have, (**right?**), so, He had only one; and so, what this verse is saying is, if you say you love, you have to give but you can't just give any raggedy thing, it is what cost you the most; and in this case, if I say that I love the world, I couldn't give an angel to die for it because (**why?**) cause I got too many of them, I could replace them anytime. I had to give what cost me so much—that which I had only one and I couldn't replace. God.
- If you say you love you have to give it, and if you give it, it has to be the highest ethical value, nothing less. Who said that actually? David, yes, when he bought the field to sacrifice to the Lord and somebody tried to give it to him for free—he says absolutely not, “I will not take something free and give it to God—I will only give to God what cost me the most;” because the sacrifice is not in the amount or it's not even what I give Him, it's that what I gave Him, costs me first.
- Now you know what that Cain and Able story was all about; they both offered, but to one, it cost more than the other. It's not just cause you give, it has to cost, another example, the widow's mind.
- Jesus says, “**you guys came giving big, the woman that gave the most is the one that gave everything, and she had the least to give.**” If your sacrifice doesn't cost you, it's not a reflection of love. For those of you aspiring to be married, (**I don't know why this whole year, everything I said, God will revert it back to marriage**); for those aspiring to be married or are married, every day is filled with you trying to prove love to the that you are and it is the highest ethic, the highest value of what you have to offer so it's what keeps the marriage going—and that's what's considered love. Amen? That's the ethic of love.
- So, in other words, yes, I love God with all my heart, mind, and soul, but in order to prove it, I need to obey Him,

And what is the second commandment?

- It is to love others as you love yourself; so, in other words, if I am going to love God, it is very crucial for me to sit down and learn His love for me; and today I'm going to share with you, one aspect of how love is project towards you and one God hoped you would understand in saving you.
- And so when He saves you, there's something He wants to understand, so what I'm about to show you is only the tip of the iceberg; I'm not going to do your homework for you, but I'm going to lead you in the right direction of seeing how God loved you, and then I will show you from the Bible that those who receive this understanding, how it transferred into actions of loving others almost immediately.
- In fact, I will show you how whenever you're reading Jesus' stories in the gospels, it follows this trend. The Bible made sure it followed a specific trend and I'll show you what it is; and so, if you're with me, let us go ahead and turn to the book of
- Luke 15:1-7. 1-7 is shown on the display before you go to the stories in the Bible, (**alright**). So, this is one of the trends you'll see, and I'll point it out to you in summary:

Luke 15:1-7

¹⁵Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him;

- the Bible loves to call the reader's attention to the idea that when Jesus came, He came for the lost and not those that are healed; He came for the sick, not the healed. Not those that believed they are so self-sufficient that they could handle it on their own,
- He came for those that needed redemption and so one of the things you'll see a lot in the gospels a lot about Jesus is this very idea that "tax collectors and sinners drew close to Him;" this is why I like telling people, Jesus wasn't really a friend of sinners, sinners became His friend.
- In other words, for those of us who likes hanging out with unbelievers and then we say, "well, Jesus did it too," what I'm trying to say is Jesus actually attracted them by His life. Because if they attract you by their life, that's a different story; **(we're together?)** hanging out with sinners is totally different in the Bible; it means what you have to offer attracted them and didn't repulse them.
- "Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him." Oh, and then, you always come and see this, "And the Pharisees and the scribes complained, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."
- So, He spoke this parable to them, saying... One of the things you will constantly see about Jesus is this narrative that He liked to talk to people and only allowed the type of people He allowed to touch Him, are the kinds of people that the establishment wouldn't even allow to come close to Jesus—**or shouldn't**. It's people that you shouldn't expect that a man in His stature should welcome into His presence.
- In other words, the kind of people that Jesus attracted are the outcast people—that were considered "tax collectors and sinners." By the way if somebody called you a tax collector back in the day its worse than a sinner—You're just going to hell. Because what did a tax collector do back then, they exploited the people by stealing to put it in their pockets and then take what is left and then give it to the government.
- So, tax collectors were very, very rich. On top of that, remember I told you tide in the Old Testament is not 10%; one of them is 10%. By the time you were done, you were about 29 to 30%; plus, the taxes you went home 60 – 70% with no money, **(alright?)**. So, you were just condemned to hell and then there were the regular sinners; so then, you will always see that there are other people who should not be around Jesus.
- So, when Jesus heard the Pharisees, those that were on top the church, they were one that looked perfect, you didn't touch their clothing cause if you did they would have to take a bath; if you were a woman and you spoke to them, they were meant to ignore you; you couldn't, yeah, they were too perfect to be disturbed.
- They knew the entire Bible; if you asked them, "hey, what did Deuteronomy, chapter 5:2 says, they will tell you; **(right?)**; so, Jesus gives them this parable:
"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?"

- When the Pharisees were complaining that Jesus was talking to these kinds of people, this is what Jesus tells them and this is what Jesus wants us to understand about our salvation.
- Let's break it down; "**Which of you,**" so, Jesus is speaking to those that take care of shepherders; so, what was he saying about himself? "**I'm a shepherd, I'm actually the good shepherd.**"
- If you're a Bible student you know that He's connecting Himself (**to who?**), David. "**I am that promise that came out of the line of David and I am that good shepherd.**" And not only I am a good shepherd and what makes me good though, is this, "**having a hundred sheep,**" that means I'm a shepherd who knows how many sheep I have.
- What does that mean, that means that I can account for every person that belongs to Me. Nobody is obscured, but look at this—this is another thing He says, if he loses one of them, "**who does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and does not go after the one?**"

What is Jesus trying to say?

"What makes me good is that I know all my sheep and if one is lost, the life of one sheep is worth all of them." **Did you hear what is said?** He leaves the ninety-nine in the (**what?**), wilderness—what does that mean, they're alone (**why?**) what imagery is Jesus trying to give?

- That nobody should get lost in the community and think they're not as important as somebody else. If there was just you on earth, He would have still died. **Did you get me?** What Jesus is saying is listen, I'm not all about, (yes, it's about the community) because Christianity is about community, but every person in that community was wanted.
- Everyone that is in that community "was brought by Me" and if you were the only one on earth, "I would have still died on the cross." I didn't die just because I saw a community, I saw each of you; to the point that He's saying, "**if you have a hundred sheep, if you lose one of them**" does not, (He's like, it's common sense); I will leave the ninety-nine to show that that one; my community is incomplete if you're not a part of it.
 - The Christian Kingdom is incomplete if either of us is not in it, we're not complete. He says literally, when I look down from Heaven and I see that one go astray, my Kingdom "AIN'T" complete without THAT one! Guess what I'm about to do, I'm about to go get THAT one... "and I will not stop until He finds it."

What is the Bible telling us now?

That God so loved you, that He came down from Heaven to find you where you are, and to die for You, alone...

Luke 15: 1-7

⁵And when he has found *it*, he lays *it* on his (**what?**) shoulder. **But what is the key word?** rejoicing. **What does that mean?** You and your sins were never a burden for Him, it was His pleasure to die for you... **You're with me?**

- He found you and (**did what?**), carried you the way you are, “who told you to leave the fold?” Now imagine Jesus in a Nigerian movie; “who told that Goat to leave?”
- Ewe! doesn’t listen... that person has become a burden on my life!”
- But the Bible is saying that literally when He finds you, literally all He wants is that if you give your life to him, He’ll carry you; He’ll carry you back home.
- He’s saying, “I’m the good shepherd, listen, I know it cost me My life but trust Me, it was worth laying down (**why?**) as long as I found you.” **“If you ain’t feeling the love yet, nothing gon get you!”**
- Then He says, but I’m going to do it rejoicing... For those of us who thinks that God is trying to beat you upside the head because of your decision, (**guess what?**) He’s saying, “I’m happy to bring you back home.”
- If you read some few verses later, what story does it go into, “The Prodigal Son.” Just three verses later after 7; and then in the middle of that is actually another parable; talking about if you lost one coin, you actually don’t worry about the others, you go looking for that one coin. And then you go and put a party together because you found that coin.
- There’s something irrational about that; if you lost a quarter right now, don’t call me to be happy with you...But He says no, “when I find that coin, the amount I have is not complete without that coin.”
- ⁶And when he comes home, he calls together *his* (**because of ONE sheep that refused to stay with the rest**), he finds it and the calls all his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’

Why would that verse be put in there, why would that line?

To tell you how valuable you are; you’re worth celebrating... “So worth to me that it is worth throwing a party in Heaven to celebrate the fact that I found you again.”

- Let me tell you how deep this is; I hope you know that when Adam and Eve sinned, the idea was that Jesus/God was supposed to be married to His bride; when they decided to “cheat” on Him by eating the fruit, we ended up being married to (**who?**) Satan.
- Jesus therefore is considered the bridegroom that comes to win her back.

Why is He throwing her a party?

Because you’re a part of the bride and as you come in, His bride’s image is being complete. It’s a love story for Him; and she’s not complete until you’re in.

Can you imagine the joy in finding that love again?

That’s the joy He has with everyone that comes back; this is how important you are; we’re not talking about community, **“I’m talkin bout you.”**

- And then He throws a part in here again and tell us this, **“I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”**
- When you were saved, heaven went wild because God’s love for His bride was being materialized. Amen?
- These things which I tell you, is the tip of the iceberg; when you received Jesus, He wanted you to feel that not only were you important, not only were you chosen, but that He left every sense of prestige to come out looking for you.
- He took you on Him with not burden and was happy to have you and the day you said, “I do” heaven went wild.

So, what do I want you to know?

He didn’t just come for us; He actually came for me; He actually came for you.

- It’s not that He just died for the world, He actually died for me and **(What?)** you did not deserve it. It’s not that you did something special, no, all you did do what sheep do; get distracted and walk away from the fold.
- It was He that came down and **(what?)** came to find you, brought you on His neck and brought you back and **(what?)** because you came back to Him, then His fold was completed, Amen?
- But there’s something else I want to show you that I don’t want us to go over; **coming for you puts His reputation and life on the line**; but He doesn’t think twice.

Why does it put His reputation on the line?

I want you to notice that almost in every story of Jesus dealing with other people, His reputation wasn’t what He was trying to build **(why?)** because if it was His reputation that He wanted, He would have been hanging out with the Pharisees, judging.

- But He didn’t mind going for the lost sheep knowing that there is a risk that the sheep might deny coming with me.
- He went knowing that if I go looking for this sheep, I run the risk or a lion, tiger, or bear attacking me; have you ever read David when the Bible says, when he came to kill Goliath,

What did he say?

“The Lord gave me the lion and the bear;” **where did those come from?** When you are a shepherd, you need to know how to kill those because when you’re in the wilderness, they come to eat your sheep.

- So, when He went looking for you, it was so risky that He could have died and guess **(what?)**, He did die... But He still went looking for you; but He also...

What was Jesus' reputation?

Look, look at Him, He says He's holy; look at Him, hanging out with people He's not supposed to. But He didn't think twice to put his reputation on the line to come for you.

- In fact, people like me, I'm not coming for you; cause if you're not a perfect human being that means you're going to be doing imperfect things, and when I attach my name with you, every imperfect thing you do make me look bad, **(doesn't it?)**.
- Isn't that what the world keeps saying, "if you're a Christian why ya'll do..."
- He didn't care, I put my name on it as long as you're saved, I won't think twice, Amen? So, for that, let's turn to, Luke, chapter 19, 1-9; let's go see Zacchaeus' story and how what I taught you, applies to scripture.

Are we together, we're liking this, we're good?

So, remember two things that I showed you; that we don't deserve it at all, He's the one that comes and looking, He comes our way, **(right?)**, and at the same time He puts His reputation on the line and usually those that He's coming for, don't look like they deserve it. And that's what we're going to see in Luke, Chapter 19

Luke 19:1-9

¹Then *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho. ²Now behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus;

- **(but then the Bible does something very important)**, the Bible gives us—so if you're reading the Bible now, this is where you slow down; the intensity of the verse is in the description of the individuals that are in the cast.
- When the Bible actually tells you their name and describes them based on the geographical location, that means that there is something that is very substantially important to be zoned into.
- So, there's actually the woman at the well with the issue of blood, but then there's Zacchaeus; there's just the centurion, , that's done on purpose too, **(alright?)**.

Now, his name is Zacchaeus who is **(what?)** a chief tax collector; he wasn't a tax collector, he was the chief. So, if anybody told you that he was just a tax collector, they just stole that verse from you; he's the chief.

So, what does that mean?

If tax collectors are hated, what do you do with the chief? They're almost dead! You're just looking for that One accident that nobody saw, **(alright?)**. So, what this seems is, that usually for example, why were people like Hared, let's talk about Hared; **let me give you a little context:**

Jerusalem, back in the day; Hared **(right?)** and on top of Hared, there was a Roman that watched over Hared so that by the time they were going to kill Jesus, they took Him to the Roman principal and then the Roman sent Him back to Hared. Now, let me explain something...

Jerusalem was like a slum that you didn't want to serve in.

In fact, if the emperor, if Cesar sent you to Jerusalem, that means that either you were being punished or you were best at your job because they were unruly. You were subjecting people as dictatorship; (**okay?**), it looked like a slum. Now, if you were a chief tax collector, that means your house looked amazing and that it sat in the middle of the slum. You had money, you had prestige; your clothes were purple-royal—while everybody looked like they were dying. Everybody looked like John the Baptist more than they looked like Zacchaeus.

Does that help you?

Alright. So, he was the chief tax collector. So not only did he take tax, he watched over those that took the tax; (**what does that mean?**), that means that he was even oppressing the tax collectors. Cause they collected from the people, and he took their share from them and gave them there's. So, he reported to the top; (**yeah?**). Now, as chief collector most likely he bids for the right to collect tax and then hires other tax collectors to actually gather the tax—that is what he does, that what is said in the commentary.

- And he was (**what?**) rich. (**What does that mean?**), that means that he did his job well; steal—that's what his job is. But then, he sought to see who Jesus was—"who is this other person that everybody is talking about?" But could not, because of the crowd, number one—there was a crown around Jesus—but this is why the Bible wanted to tell you that there was a crowd; it wasn't because it was a problem, except he was of a short stature...

Why would the Bible tell you that?

Because he's not a public figure type; he's not the kind of people you notice... not that short people are not noticed, but he's evil first of all, so the crowd was not worried about him, but on top of that he was short—so the Bible's trying to tell you that he's the kind of people great people should not focus on. (**Why?**) because **he's evil and he don't even look good.**

- Cause usually when you're short at that time and you are rich (**guess what?**) you had a pot belly too! **I know the Bible didn't say that, but it's common.** Now verse 4:

⁴So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. He just knew Jesus was going to pass by—so Jesus should not even focus on him. ⁵And when Jesus came to the place (**now, remember I'm talking about how Jesus finds His lost sheep—I wish I had enough time to go through every story that Jesus encountered people; it was either He was going to pass by, or He didn't want to go with you On purpose. It's as if, like the woman with the blood, she had to reach out; the blind people, help me, help me, help me...**).

- Zacchaeus, he should have passed by; just telling me the stories, the centurion is the one that came; He was actually heading somewhere else; Lazarus, He came late; go with the story, there's always some impediment—it's like Jesus didn't want to go. Or, He was passing by and or the woman that said, "You could heal like a dog too," Jesus didn't want,

it's like He didn't want to... Go read all of them; it's like if He wants to pass by—it's as if He knew where He wanted to be, because He met every appointment with every soul...

- But then, you notice, that what makes a difference is the hunger that reaches out; like Zacchaeus climbing the tree. “Blessed are those that hunger and thirst for they shall be filled.” You can't be in pride and make that appointment...
- Like the rich boy, “I've done everything,” Jesus says, “**sell everything and follow me.**” He missed the total appointment, **(why?)** He came for His lost sheep but His lost sheep was full of pride and glory.

So, what happened?

⁴So he ran ahead and climbed up into the Sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. ⁵And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up **(ah, Jesus never misses His appointments;)** Never. and saw him, and said to him **(what?), Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for I must stay (where?), at your house.”**

- I know nobody wants you, I know nobody wants to talk to you, but if I can change you, it becomes a better testimony than changing somebody that looks changeable.

You want me to say that with other words?

“I rather change the one that everybody has given up on because that's better evidence that I can change hearts then to change the ones that look like they're ready.

- It doesn't matter how hard your heart is, He's coming for you. Let's keep going.
- ⁶So he made haste and came down and received Him **(what?)** joyfully.
- “Me, you want to come to me?’ You're not afraid I'm going to come to collect tax when you come to see me?

⁷But when they saw it, they all **(what?)** complained—what kind of Jesus are you? Saying, **(that's why you never compare yourself with other people cause it seems like it's your type of heart that attracts Him);** “He has gone to be a guest with a man who is **(what?)** a sinner.”

⁸Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord,

- so look, I just showed you that when the love of God chooses you because you know how wretched you are, all of the sudden you receive that love, now the Bible tells you something happened to see His actions; I told you that you must love God back for the love that He's giving you is reflected in the love that you have for others.

And what happened?

Look at verse 8, ⁸Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Look Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore **(what?)** fourfold.”

what happened?

He encountered love. For some reason, Zacchaeus knew that the only way to appreciate the love that he received from God, was not to take the money and just say, “oh look here, take it, or just say I am a changed man but keep the money...

- He says, “no, I am really changed and I’m going to reciprocate the love that you’ve given me—then the people that I have exploited, will get back what they want”—real change, therefore, undoes how you felt and how you acted towards others before Christ and after Christ should be different.
- It has to be different; it has to be different...Because in other words, you cannot receive the love of God and not fix relationships—that requires you to understand what I said last week...
- Because the proper way to love God is to reflect the love that He gave you, to those that don’t love you. And by given them back fourfold,

what do you think that does in the community?

If I gave you back fourfold of what I stole from you, what does that do? It actually proves the power of Jesus Christ.

- First of all, who gives back money fourfold? I could give back what I took from you—but if I give you back fourfold, I’m repenting. For me to be a tax collector not part of the slum, but for me to give back money into the slum, that means **(what?)** God has changed my heart.

We’re together?

⁹And Jesus said to him, **“Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is the son of Abraham; ¹⁰for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was (what?) lost.”**

- The sheep that went lost; when I find you, you changed and the hearts of people also changed, **(why?)** cause they can see the change I’ve done in you.

But how do they know?

The love. You know how they say “walk like a Christian, what does that mean if you’re not even impacting people’s lives—what does that even mean? “I don’t curse, I don’t steal” that’s good for you—but how is that impacting people’s LIVES?

- The love of God you receive has to change people’s lives. So, when I say you need to love people, the Bible says you’re supposed to love your enemies; I’m not even talking about just being nice—I’m talking about,

How are you showing the true transformation you have received where they can tangibly walk away with something and say, this person really is changed, there’s something to this Jesus?

Our life has to create a question within people’s heads because of the love we give them.

- Not that they deserve it, cause nobody does; but then you want them to see who Christ is in you. Let's go to the last one; so, remember we just talked about Zacchaeus and how the love of God comes; in another story I want to show you, the same thing happens is the woman at the well.
- Jesus was heading somewhere else, decided He wanted to stay at the well (**right?**), and then He sends His disciples away. First of all, if you are a Rabbi, you don't do that; (**Why?**) because back in the day if they saw you speaking to a woman, there's only one of two things you wanted; food or NOT food. And in fact, you see it in the question they asked Him; so, Jesus has this—so this woman comes and it's the type of woman, again, the story is—do read it at home, I'm gonna just keep going because of our time. But the story comes in the book of John, chapter 4.
- So, all of the sudden this woman and Jesus starts talking to her and says, "give me some water," and she's like, 'uh, uh, stay away; she's like no, we're not doing this because (**why?**) because she has experience with men—she was not playing any games; (**how do I know that?**) she had five husbands; well, the last one wasn't hers yet; so, she was an experienced person—the kind of people that the community doesn't talk to.
- Because everybody knows oh, that's that woman who, "she, she just... and she's not even married." So, again, we see in the story the kind of people that Jesus likes are the kind of people that the community said (**what?**), "**we don't want to talk to em.**"
- So, then He starts talking bout, "man you don't know who you're talking to, if you knew who you were talking to, I could give you water that you won't even thirst anymore." That just don't sound like; that sounds like weird game (**right?**), cause it sounds like—cause it's like, "oh you want water...".
- No, you know; and then she gets confused and was like, "what you talking bout?" Then He starts talking about who He is and then all of the sudden He gets into the word knowledge, and then He attracts the conversation when it goes into the word of knowledge (**right?**)—but at that point, check this out:

John 4:27-29

²⁷And at that *point* His disciples come back, and they marveled, (**why were they surprised?**), not that He was Jesus was preaching but that He was talking to a woman.

- That He would talk with a woman; so, that means up till now, if they marveled it, that means that up to this verse, that Jesus was not really dealing with women one on one or so.
- And then they were like; wait, wait, and this was a serious teaching moment where Jesus was like, "naw, women too." So, Jesus sat there and then they said, (they marveled that He talked with a woman, yet no one said anything).
- That means they accused Him in their hearts, (**why?**) "What do you seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" They were confused, like, "what do you want from her, actually" like "why are You even talking to her?"

- So, it's not, they didn't see it from the perspective of Jesus should give her, **(why?)** because cause they didn't see Jesus, they thought Jesus from a cultural perspective that Jesus should be giving to a certain type of people, not some type of people so if He's talking to her, that means that He's trying to take something from her and not give to her—which is lust and not love. Alright.
- But then, when they came, they were all accusing Him in his heart; He spoke to her and told her everything about herself, listen, she received love from a person she was not supposed to.

What did it do to her?

Immediately, then ²⁸The woman left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, ²⁹Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"

- She went from a woman that had four husbands to—the one who she is living with is not even married to her, to being the witness of Jesus Christ but the keyword, the powerful word here is that she went to **(who?)** the men.
- God lifted her status in society, gave her a new purpose and a new word that she went, (first of all they knew her as the woman who was like this...), and now they knew her as a witness of Christ.

John 4:39-41

What happened?

She encountered a love that changed the narrative of her life; what was the result?

³⁹And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did."

- Let me tell you something, when you say, "I'm preach the gospel, all you're saying is, I'm preaching the love that I received." That's all it is. The love that she received when Jesus told her about herself is all she did; she went and **(guess what?)**, when people met Jesus for themselves, they were transformed forever.

⁴⁰So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. Your job is to bring them to Jesus and Jesus has got it from there...

⁴¹And many more believed because of His own word.

- Today I wanted to prove to you from scripture, from the stories in the Bible, that if you have truly met the love of God, then the evidence should be in how you treat the words of God.
- If you are a person that has received the word of God and you're still sitting on it, I doubt if you've really been transformed. Because every single person I have read in scripture that encountered Jesus—that happened; **(And many believed because of His own word)**.
- Jesus says, "**How could you see one sheep go astray and not go get that person,**" that's love. And in other words, how can you say you are like Me and you're watching people lack the love of God and you've refused to show it?

How is that possible?

Christianity was not just me, myself, and I; it's "I become like Him, so we can get them." Because now you're the shepherd here; you're the person that, you're the extension of His arms—His arms and legs here on earth to do **(what?)**, to do what He says You should do.

- So, today I wanted to show you that if you truly receive the love of God, I am not asking you to just—if you notice love has a purpose and it is intentional. Love is intentional in the sense that "if I truly love, then I must be intentional about it."
- You cannot tell me you love God and the people in your life—you're just relating to them, you're just walking with them—and some of us have a personality that is, you know we are caring, very caring **(right?)**.
- We're very caring and so we, we give ourselves to helping people and doing all this—and sometimes they end up **(what?)**, taking advantage of that, that's not the kind of love I'm asking you to do.
- Everything Jesus did with love is very strategic; everything Jesus did was strategic. So, whether it is your personality or not, I'm telling you to love the unlovable. And,

What do I mean by that?

Be intentional in how you show Jesus with your life. If they're unbearable, "how can I show Jesus to unbearable people," it's in your Bible... Like the prodigal son, when the son said, "let me go, I want to go," the father thought it was love to let him go.

- The father was like, "okay, okay." He packaged his birthright, gave him and says, "if that's what you want, go." When Satan ravaged him because the father knew that that was going to destroy him, **(guess what?)**, He came right back; guess whose arms were open, father, **(why?)**, love to receive him back.
- So, in other words, love doesn't force itself on the person, love tells the person what truth is; what the person decides what to do with it—that's their responsibility.
- But when they have learned from their mistake, have an open arm to receive them back; but make sure they've learned it.

Were we together?

So, love is very strategic. So, as we go from here, I'll talk about the love strategy; from the today I just wanted us to understand that if you have truly received the love of God, we saw like Zacchaeus—it transforms where you give back—and like the woman at the well when it makes you a witness of who God is... Amen? Let's be on our feet.