



By Matthew Black Text: Mark 3 March 7, 2010
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Love Like Jesus Loved

“...whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.” (Mark 3:35)

I Enjoy Dogs

Not hot dogs. Canine dogs! You say, Pastor Black, you don't even own a dog. That's right. But I still love them.

I have several reasons why I don't yet own a dog.

1. First, every morning that I see my neighbors out in the freezing weather walking their dog, I'm glad I don't yet own one. Though I have thought about how to get around that! (car/leash photo).
2. Two, we have a one year old at home. How many of you know that one year olds are just about more than enough responsibility without a dog?!
3. Three, my daughter is allergic to most dogs. I know we could get one of those really ugly bald dogs. I even have a name for her—Lucille Bald. Anyway, like I said, I love dogs.
 - How many people have a dog?
 - **How many of you have other inferior pets?**
 - How many of you remember the first dog you ever had? Mine was a Norwegian Elk Hound. Yasmin was her name.

Why Dogs are Great

You know why dogs are great? Because they are so positive and enthusiastic. Let me tell you about Yasmin. I could be busy for a week, hardly spend any time with her, and then when I had time she was overjoyed with my company—no resentment, no grudges, no nothing. It's great! She's just wagging her tail, glad to be in my company, and every day's a new day!

Quote from Fredrick the Great

I read a quote this week by a man named Fredrick the Great. He was a military hero in Prussia during the 1700s. He said, “The more I get to know people, the more I like my dog”.

Most of the problems we deal with in life are people problems, true or false? I thought I was the perfect mature Christian until I got married. Then I saw how selfish I was. I thought I knew how to raise children. Then I had children. I thought I knew everything in college. Then I got a real job with real people. Everything goes great until you introduce people into the picture.

Here are Two Facts about People Problems

1. If you could remove all the people problems in your life, you would have very few problems. We would have no misunderstandings, no harsh demands, no intense requests by others, no quarrels, fights, criticisms or complaints. It would be a great place to be.

That's the first fact. Here's the second:

2. That's never going to happen! We are never, ever going to be free from people problems. We are sinful people, and we live in a world of sinful people. So our goal cannot be eliminating people problems. The goal is dealing with people problems in a Christlike manner. The goal is living and loving people as Jesus loved people.

You might say, “You know, I'd reach out to people more, but every time I do, I get hurt. I get misunderstood. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, **“To be great is to be misunderstood”**. Some of you when you hear that say, “I didn't realize how great I was!”

We have to understand that every person around us is a sinner. As Christians, we are all bundles of problems that are slowly being cleaned up.

Have You Ever Been Hurt by People? Join the Club! You are not alone!

- **Consider Joseph**- Joseph was told by God in a dream that he would one day be prime minister. His brothers hated him and threw him in a pit and sold him into slavery. He kept doing right and ended up as the chief butler of Potiphar's house. Potiphar's wife wants to sleep with him. He refuses and RUNS! And what's he get for it? He spends years rotting in a prison cell. Finally, through some amazing circumstances Joseph becomes prime minister. Now he has the power to get even. Remember his brothers come to Egypt after Joseph spent so many years in slavery and prison life. What does Joseph do? He weeps for them. He loves them. He does good to them and during a famine sets them up to live as kings in Goshen! He loved those who hurt him and maligned him. Joseph returned good for evil.
- **Consider David**- What about David? He was minding his own business, keeping the sheep of his father. And one day he hears his father call from the house. He approaches his father, but there are all his brothers and the Prophet Samuel. How unusual! Samuel pours oil all over his head, and he's told he's going to be the king. Nobody asked him if he wanted this! He is summoned to take some food down to the front of the battle line. While he's there, he sees a giant ranting against God and taunting the army of Israel. He decides there's a cause, and gets his slingshot, and puts the giant out of his misery. The current king likes this, and David becomes his musician, commander, confidant, and advisor, until one day he decides David wants his job. Even though God appointed him to be king, the current king wants to hunt David down and kill him. For 12 years David fled from Saul. He lived in caves, lived off the land, and at times had no protection but God. When David gets the chance, on two occasions to kill Saul, what does David do? He shows kindness and spares his life. David returned kindness for hatred.

Who Was the Most Maligned Person Who Ever Lived and yet Loved Like No Other?

Jesus- He was reproached and misunderstood concerning His supernatural birth. The going rumor in his day was that he was an illegitimate child. Maybe the son of a Roman soldier. They disputed His divine origin. They tried to stone Him when He said He existed before Abraham. He took to task the established religion and was misunderstood. They said vicious things about Him, even accusing Him of belonging to Satan and his kingdom of darkness. His motives were misjudged. His actions were misunderstood. He went to the Cross misunderstood. Among His final words were, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do!" The nails, the crown of thorns, the cross—had they not misunderstood, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory! He came to save mankind, and instead of welcoming Him, we crucified Him! Jesus loved us on that cross. Though we ignore and despise and mock Jesus, He died to save us! For all our sin, He opens His arms to us and says "come to me!" How can we be like Jesus in loving people? We are going to find out in Mark 3. Before we do that, let's pray.

Prayer for Guidance: *"Dear Father in Heaven, Thank you that you love sinful, broken, messed up people. Lord, we want to look at people as you looked at them. Please renew our mind from all selfish thinking, all hurt feelings, and all bitterness and grudges, and clean our hearts and minds with your Word as we apply it to our lives today. Give us the grace to always choose to love broken people like Jesus did. Help us to live in a way that honors Jesus. In His mighty name we pray, Amen."*

What kind of people did Jesus love? There was only one kind. Sinful people. Every one of us has a ton of flaws. Have you ever wanted to step back from loving and serving and reaching people because you have been hurt by them? We all have. We are introduced to four types of people in Jesus' life, and they all gave Jesus unique challenges, but He loved them all. We are going to learn how to love people like Jesus loved people.

I. **We need to Love as Jesus Loved.**

Jesus loved people. We need to do the same! People are filled with problems, that's why they need our love.

Let's begin with **Mark 3:7**, "But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea". What? I thought Jesus came to help and save people. Why is he withdrawing? He's kind of on the run, because we read in **verse 6**, "the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him". They are after Jesus. They want to kill Him. The Pharisees were blood hounds who were not satisfied until Jesus was hanging and bloodied on the Cross. Once Christ begins reaching out to people the problems begin. That doesn't stop Him from loving people.

A. Jesus loved people in the midst of **Needy Neighbors (vs. 7-12)**. There wasn't a person where Jesus went that did not need something from Jesus. Let's read about it:

Verses 7, "But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judaea".

Jesus is in Capernaum at Peter's house where He healed the paralyzed man. There were likely hundreds of people surrounding Peter's little shack of a house. But now as Jesus withdraws and heads toward the Sea of Galilee, ***it's not hundreds, but literally thousands of people crowding Him*** and following Him. Word is spreading quickly.

Land of Galilee

Now the beach at Galilee is very narrow, and there are very steep hills surround Him. The hills were covered with people and pressed him all the way to the beach.

We find out where the people came from in **verse 8**, they came... "from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him." They heard what He was doing. Word is spreading quickly.

Christ is feeling the pressure of the crowds. We read in **verse 9**, "And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him." We know from another Gospel that this was Peter's fishing boat. The needs were so great that He had to have a back up plan to get away from the people.

In **verse 10** we read how needy the people were, "For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues." The word "plagues" means "afflictions" and has the idea of a writhing pain. People who were in writhing pain for one reason or another were coming to Jesus.

What did they want from Jesus?

"they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues" (**verse 10**). There were no hospitals back then. Can you imagine going to a doctor, and you don't have to talk to him or go to surgery to get healed? All you have to do is touch Him and you're healed.

In **verses 11 and 12** He also freed people from demonic influences.

Application: The demands were intense! There are demands on your life today. Perhaps you feel like you want to meet every one's needs. We are all needy people. Let me give you some insight.

1. **There are more human needs than there are human solutions.** So what is the answer? How can we love people even though we cannot meet all their needs? You have to realize one thing: You are not the Savior. You are not God. You are not the Holy Spirit. There is only one that can meet the needs of people. You are just a channel. You need to point people to Jesus. Until you realize that, you are going to be going around in circles.
2. **Some days you want to give up because there are so many messed up hurting people.** Let me give you some advice. Look in the mirror. You are messed up too. If you have been helped, it's because you've touched Jesus. You've reached out to Him. Point people to Him.
3. Let me say this too, **you need to learn to say "no" to people.** You cannot meet their needs, but Jesus can. So many times we are burdened by the busyness of life because we think we are the Savior. We want to help people. Ultimately you can't help anyone. You can only point them to Jesus. Remember that!
4. You might say "People are so demanding—I can never make them happy". That's exactly right. Remember, you are not on this earth to please people. You are here to please God! Someone said, "Every opportunity is not a call. Every need is not God saying, Do that!"
5. What did Jesus do? He did the Father's will. He often withdrew for prayer. In Mark 2, we read that he went out early in the morning for prayer while people were sleeping at the door. We need to keep our eyes on the main goal. **You are not God. You can only point people to God.** You need to love needy neighbors by pointing them to God.

A. Jesus loved people in the midst of NEEDY NEIGHBORS.

- B. Jesus loved people in the midst of **Betraying Friends (vs. 13-19a)**. Jesus' friends pledged their love and loyalty to Him, and then denied Him and one of them even betrayed Him. "And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him." Luke tells us that before Jesus did this He spent all night in prayer. And here's the Apostles that Jesus chose, **verse 14**, "And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, ¹⁵ And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: ¹⁶ And **Simon he surnamed Peter; ¹⁷ And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: ¹⁸ And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite, ¹⁹ And **Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him...****".

We see two people that jump out in these verses: Peter who denied Christ, and Judas who betrayed Him. We know that Jesus chose them in spite of the fact that He knew they

would turn on Him. In fact, all the disciples would turn away from Him and be scattered at His crucifixion, except for the Apostle John, who was there at His Cross with Jesus' mother.

Why did Jesus allow for Judas to be part of the twelve and to betray Him? Because He knew we would have people betray us. Some people who betray us are friends of God, like Peter who denied Christ. Others are His enemies, like Judas Iscariot.

Application: How many of you this morning know the pain of betrayal? Some people you love and trust did something awful to you. They've injured you deeply. How do you deal with that?

1. **Here's something you that is NOT the solution to betrayal.** The danger is that you would become discouraged and bitter. You would live in fear or bitterness. People all around you are living in silent pain—torn apart by bitterness and hurt. **Bitterness** means you carry the offense around. Bitterness hurts no one but yourself.
2. **Here's the solution.** You need to absorb the betrayal. Jesus never defended Himself when there were personal attacks. I'm not talking here about issues of offenses with brethren. Matthew 18 tells us those need to be carefully confronted. But when you are slandered by people who are not interested in getting to the truth, you need to let it go and absorb it.

- The Bible says in **1 Peter 2:23**, that Jesus, "when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously".
- Jesus said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (**Matthew 5:44**).
- Or how about this one, Jesus said in **Matthew 5:39**, "That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

Don't be surprised when you are betrayed. Don't get discouraged. Commit yourself to God who judges righteously. Have a heart of forgiveness toward those who wrong you. Often they don't know what they are doing.

Remember what Jesus prayed when He was hanging on the Cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (**Luke 23:34**).

If you are to love as Jesus loved, you need to keep loving friends who betray you!

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- A. Jesus loved people in the midst of **NEEDY NEIGHBORS**.
 - B. Jesus loved people in the midst of **BETRAYING FRIENDS**.
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- C. Jesus loved people in the midst of **Misjudging Family (vs. 19b-21)**. Jesus' family thought He was ***crazy!*** "...they went into an house. 20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. 21 And when his friends [*or, likely, family*] heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, **He is beside**

himself." The word "friends" can also mean his family—it is literally translated "near ones".

Jesus goes back to Peter's home, and his family comes looking for him there in Capernaum. They have travelled 30 miles from Nazareth to see Him. They get there wanting to reunite with Jesus, and eat a meal together. But we read in **verse 20**, "the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread". You might think Jesus was irked by all these people. Jesus wasn't worried about stopping for a meal because He loved the people so very much. Everywhere Jesus goes there are multitudes who need healing and who are hungry for His Word and His love.

1. **Jesus' family thought He was crazy.**

So **verse 21** says, "And when his friends [or, likely, family] heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself." Think what they must have thought. He was likely working as a carpenter with Joseph. He goes to a synagogue one day and says He's the Messiah and the synagogue excommunicates Him and would like to stone Him. Jesus leaves His day job and becomes a Rabbi. But who does He call? Who's with Jesus now? Lowly fisherman, hated tax collectors, and the sinners of the area. The people who followed Jesus were the forgotten people of society. You know what they thought? This guy's lost it! The lights are on but no one's home. Something has snapped.

2. **They were Misjudging the Most Perfect Son Who Ever Lived!**

They were saying this of the most perfect man that walked the earth! This was the most reasonable, logical, sane person in the universe. Even when He was twelve years old, remember He was teaching the learned doctors at the Temple. People saw one thing, and they assumed the worst. "Love thinketh no evil". Love always assumes the best.

Jesus Loves His Family

Even Jesus' own family assumed the worst about Him. Yet he was patient with them. He lived consistently before them, and they all ended up coming to Him for salvation. His brother James was even the pastor of the church at Jerusalem.

Application: What about you? Have you known the heartache of your family turning against you because of your faith? It can be demoralizing. D.L. Moody was called "crazy Moody". Paul's detractors said: "Much learning hath made thee mad" (**Acts 26:24**). Perhaps your family does not understand your faith. Keep loving them!

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- A. Jesus loved people in the midst of **NEEDY NEIGHBORS**.
 - B. Jesus loved people in the midst of **BETRAYING FRIENDS**.
 - C. Jesus loved people in the midst of **MISJUDGING FAMILY**.
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D. Jesus loved people in the midst of **Maligning Enemies (vs. 22-30)**. "And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils. ²³ And he called them *unto him*, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. ²⁶ And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. ²⁷ No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the

strong man; and then he will spoil his house. 28 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: 29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: 30 Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit."

Here come the Scribes—the ancient attorneys, and they blaspheme His message and ministry. They told the Spotless Lamb of God that He represented the devil. What a baseless charge. Normally Jesus would not return an answer, but when God's Word and Ministry are involved, He was obligated to defend the truth.

The Scribes said He was of Satan himself. Christ's answer is remarkable: "How can Satan cast out Satan?" (**vs. 23b**).

Application: Jesus could have destroyed these people right then and there. He had the power to. But He didn't. He was patient with those who reproached His ministry and power.

1. What should you do if God's Word or Work is maligned?

You don't have to answer every accusation that comes your way. Personal insults can be absorbed, but when God's Word or Work are attacked, you must set the record straight. When the Person or Work or Word of Jesus Christ is maligned, we must militantly defend the truth. Why? Because if people are under a delusion about the Person and Power of Christ, they cannot be saved. If they are confused about Who He is or what He can do, they will remain lost.

What you think of Christ will determine your eternity. He said He's God, He's the One "which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (**Revelation 1:8**).

2. What should you do if you have an offense against your Christian brother or sister? Don't do as the Scribes did—they went public. We are to go to our brother *in private*, and settle the matter. Make sure you give the matter due process. Hear the matter out fully before you come to any conclusions. **Matthew 18** tells us we need to go privately to our brother or sister and work things out.

II. **How Can We Love as Jesus Loved?** (vs. 31-35).

"There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. 32 And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. 33 And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? 34 And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! 35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother."

We've seen Jesus among all the people and how He reacted in love to each of them. What is the secret to loving in the midst of people with problems (which is the whole human race)?

A. Get a **love for people: touch their lives**. People are prickly, but that doesn't mean we can't get close to them! Don't isolate yourself! Get near people. There was not one person that Jesus did not love as He walked this earth. He loved the scornful religious to those who betrayed Him to those who would take up so much of his time. He even loved His family that were so leery of what He had to say. Keep loving people. Be patient with them. Don't beat them over the head with a Bible. Love them! Love them! Get a love

for people! Wait for the open door to introduce them to the One Who loves their soul more than you ever could.

- Write a letter(or email) to someone in the church. Or write a letter this week to a lost loved one. Tell them how you care about them.

B. Prepare **a place for people**. We've got to have a safe and loving environment. I said last week, and you'll hear it from me often. Tabernacle needs to be a place where hurting people feel safe. It needs to be "No Mask Zone"—a place where the worst of sinners are welcome and where we accept each other and wish the very best of each other.

C. Embrace **the plan for people: watch God transform their lives!** We are to be building a family Christ followers. Right now myself and the leadership team are developing a plan, a vision to see Tabernacle reach it's goal of building faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

We've got to be committed to multiplication. We want to multiply the family of Jesus! We want to replicate followers of Jesus Christ.

Great Commission:

Matthew 28:18-20, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen."

1. Discover the "lookers" or seekers.
2. Point them to Christ and watch them become "learners".
3. As they grow, watch them become "leaders".

No matter who you are, where you've been, or what you've done, Jesus is calling you to be a part of His family. Those who dedicate their lives to Him and make a deliberate turn to Him are welcomed into His family. You'll know you truly have faith when your joy and desire is to please Him and do His will. What does that mean? It means God wants to transform people's character and lives so that they begin living as a faithful follower of Christ.

Conclusion: Let's love people as Jesus loved them. No matter what hurt, let's open our arms and trust God to transform their lives.

(Thomas Edison): You might say, I can't love people. I've been burned by too many. Consider this: The closer Thomas Edison came to perfecting his experiments and finally inventing the light bulb, the less he ate and the less he slept. He neglected his normal duties in his shop. After over 700 failed experiments, finally, the light truly came on! Every time you flip a light on, you should remember it is the result of someone who stayed at it and did not get distracted. There's something so much more important than turning on a light in your home. There's turning on the light in people. They can be transformed. You may have bombed out 700 times, but God may use you on the 701st time you share Christ with someone. Don't give up on people! Love them!