

## Talk It Over

**They hurt you...  
LOVE THEM ANYWAY**

### SMALL TALK

1. Has anyone ever played a practical joke on you that didn't feel all that funny to you? Did you play one back on them? Care to share that story?

### VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Romans 12:9-20.** How does this section reveal what Paul means in verses 12:1-2? How does your allegiance to Christ our King show up in your relationships with others (the poor, outsiders, your enemies, those suffering)?
3. Can you show how love (v. 9) and peace (v. 18) are the general rules out of which all of the rest of these examples flow?

### GETTING PERSONAL

4. This week, how can you practice "love" and "peace" with your family? With your co-workers? With you Small group? With your Church? With \_\_\_\_\_ (is the Holy Spirit urging you to fill in this blank with a name of a person?)
5. Of the commands listed in 12:9-20, which two are easiest for you to keep? Which two are the most difficult to keep? Why?
6. Why is it that if we were asked to think about our top 3 wishes that none of these commandments show up on our wish lists? Whom do you need to love and bless this week even though he or she hurts you?

### MAKING PROGRESS

7. One of our core statements is: "Followers say, 'Follow me.'" We learned from Sunday's message that only through the power of the Holy Spirit are we enabled to follow Jesus. What do you need to do to follow more sincerely, authentically, in a more genuine way? How can you begin that right now? What step can you take today, tomorrow, and throughout this week?

August 2, 2020

**They hurt you...  
LOVE THEM ANYWAY**

*Review past titles...*

They disagree with you... LOVE THEM ANYWAY

They oppose you... LOVE THEM ANYWAY

They hurt you... LOVE THEM ANYWAY

Story of a Palestinian Pastor Living In Israel

"When Love Is Impossible," Trinity Magazine (Fall 2005), p. 16-17

Bible College professor Yohanna Katanacho pastored a small church in the Israeli city of Jerusalem. As a Palestinian living in Israel, and a Jesus follower to boot, he faced a wide variety of persecution. One of the more dangerous forms of harassment came from the Israeli soldiers who patrolled the city, looking for potential terrorists. These soldiers routinely imposed spontaneous curfews on Palestinians, and even had the legal right to shoot at a Palestinian if he or she did not respond quickly enough to their summons.

**"Jesus' command to love my enemy seemed impossible... I was living in a culture that promoted hatred...and the circumstances fed this hate on a daily basis through the newspapers, television, media, neighbors, everything. And yet Jesus' command was clear and unchanging."**

**Loving my neighbor based on determination and feeling did not work. I did not feel love. Fear and anger canceled all my efforts.** [Hurt]

**As I confessed to God my inability to love, I realized something significant. The radical love Jesus commanded is not an emotion, but a decision.... I decided to share the gospel message with the soldiers on the street.**

With new resolution, Yohanna began to carry copies of a flyer with him, written in Hebrew and English, with a quotation from Isaiah 53 and the words "Real Love" printed across the top. Every time a soldier stopped him, he handed him both his ID card and the flyer. Because the quote came from the Hebrew Scriptures, the soldier usually asked him about it before letting him go.

**After several months of this, I noticed my feelings toward the soldiers had changed. I started praying, "Lord, let them stop me, so that I can share with them the love of Jesus."**

"When Love Is Impossible," Trinity Magazine (Fall 2005), p. 16-17

Hurt people hurt people. Loved people love people. What defines you?
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Are you defined more by your hurt, or more by your love?

Have you been able to embrace the truth that there is therefore now no condemnation for you because you have fully received the love of Jesus?

## Scared, Hurt, and Angry Sheep (reviewed)

Last week we started with the visual image of what it feels like at this time following Jesus. It feels like we are little lost lambs that have fallen over the edge of a cliff, stuck on an outcropping there. We are scared. We don't know how to go up, we don't know how to go down.

We sometimes don't even recognize the hand of the shepherd leading us, we bleat at him, scoot away from him, or even bite him instead of trusting him to follow him. Yet like the good shepherd in Psalm 23...

*Psalm 23:3 (NIV2011) He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.*

What do those right paths look like that he guides us along?

Paul describes those right paths clearly in Romans 12.

*Romans 12:9-20 (NIV2011) {9} Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. {10} Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. {11} Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. {12} Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. {13} Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. {14} Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. {15} Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. {16} Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. {17} Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. {18} If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. {19} Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. {20} On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty,*

*give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”*

## **They hurt you... LOVE THEM ANYWAY**

The passage we just read begins with the statement which is point 1.

### **I. Love must be SINCERE**

(Verse 9) I hope you will dig in to the Small Group Study Questions which are available to you through the YouVersion Event Outline this morning. Because you will dig into this paragraph more deeply, if you do.

For now it just highlights for us how radical this following Jesus looks like. It makes you want to ask: Seriously? How do you *sincerely* love someone who hurt you? How do you love them anyway?

**Let's talk about sincerity, or authenticity, or being genuine for a moment.**

#### QUESTION

Are you being most authentic when you are being consistent with your emotions, OR are you being most authentic when you are consistent with your beliefs?

Which is the real authenticity? Was it the time you really gave that waiter a piece of your mind? Or that time you did NOT tell the waiter how you really felt about their dismal performance because you value kindness? This is a belief question.

## “Who am I, really?”

The latest research finds that many people report authenticity when they express compassion toward others or are living for something bigger than themselves.

I believe Jesus taught us that our truest authenticity is only found when we are set free to become who God created us to become. Jesus came to save and restore us.

I have discovered that I am most myself, when I am at peace with God and at peace with myself. I have discovered that following Jesus helps me in a very real everyday way to live more sincerely and authentically.

## II. We are most GENUINE when we FOLLOW Jesus

### What does that look like?

#### The Gospel according to Jesus.

*Mark 1:14-18 (NIV2011) {14} After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, **proclaiming the good news of God.** {15} “The time has come,” he said. “**The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!**” {16} As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. {17} “**Come, follow me,**” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” {18} At once they left their nets and followed him.*

### The Gospel

1. Jesus is King inviting you into his Kingdom
2. Repent
3. Believe the Good News
4. Follow Jesus

- Through Jesus, I am learning daily how to off load my hurts.
- Through Jesus, I am learning daily how to off load my fears.
- Through Jesus I am learning daily how to download his mercy, and grace to help me in my time of need.
- Through Jesus I am learning to love more genuinely.

### III. But how do you **FOLLOW** this difficult **PATH**

*1 Corinthians 15:1-4 (NIV2011) {1} Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. {2} **By this gospel you are saved**, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. {3} For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, {4} that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,***

#### **What Is the Gospel?**

The gospel is this: the Kingdom of God has come through Jesus of Nazareth. He is Christ, the King, God's one and only Son. He died on the cross for our sins, was buried, and was resurrected on the third day according to the Scriptures. In His great love and by His amazing grace, God our Father saves everyone who repents of their sin, believes the gospel, and follows Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. When King Jesus returns on the last day, the great Day of Judgment, everyone who followed Him will enter the eternal Kingdom of God.

(See also John 3:16; Eph. 2:8-10; Matt. 25:31-46)

“Love Them Anyway” is not **impossible**. This is **imperative**.

If we claim to be in the Kingdom, in allegiance to our King, we have been commanded to “love them anyway” the same way he loved us anyway.