

SERMON SERIES: For Everyone

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Sermon Title

“We Love Like Jesus”

Introduction

This week, we continued a new series called “For Everyone”. Over the next six weeks, we are going to be focusing on the different values of Calvary, rooted in Scripture, that are essential for us to continue in the work of our mission: To Make Disciples Who Live and Love Like Jesus. This value that we are going to talk about this week, one that we embrace here, is “We Love Like Jesus”. Oftentimes, loving people can be hard. They get on our nerves, they stress us out, and they hurt us. But Jesus went through all of that and more during His time on Earth, and still he chose to love and called us to do the same. Because that is how people get to see the truth of who Jesus is and what He did for us in the greatest act of love in history. To get started this week, answer this icebreaker question with your group:

- What would you say you are known for? How would the people closest to you honestly describe you?

Seek the Word

Read Mark 1:40-42 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- What does the leper’s approach to Jesus in this story teach us about coming to Him with our needs and vulnerabilities?
- How does it feel to read (“hear”) Jesus say the words, “I am willing” to this man in his moment of need? What are you hoping Jesus is willing to do for you?

Read John 13:34-35 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- How does Jesus define the way we are supposed to love each other? Why is this significant compared to the way we are inclined to love people?
- How do you usually identify other disciples out in the world? How do you think they identify you?

Go Deeper

The religious law of the time restricted lepers to isolation from community, from comfort and care, and from healing. They were outcasts, untouchable, unclean. The leper in this story spent the entirety of his illness feeling this way, but the minute that he saw Jesus, he came to Him to ask for healing. This man pushed through all of the rules and expectations and instead chose faith that Jesus would take care of Him. Reflect on your life up to this point. Are there areas where you feel unworthy or hesitant to approach Jesus? What are your next steps now, knowing that you have the freedom to come to Him in faith?

Talk About It

- Considering Jesus' emphasis on love, and our mission as a church to Love Like Jesus, how can we practically demonstrate the love of Jesus to those who are considered "unlovable" in our communities? Take some time trying to identify who those people are.
- How can you focus on loving like Jesus daily? What reminders or habits do you need to instill in your everyday life in order to prioritize loving like Jesus?
- The sermon highlighted a pathway that some people believe is how a life of faith works:
 - **Behave** → **Believe** → **Belong**. Which is the idea that people are supposed to clean up their act and start living perfectly, then find some rock-solid faith that everyone else has in order to have a place to belong. However, we learned that the Kingdom of God works in a different way...
 - **Belong** → **Believe** → **Become**. In this journey, we see that everyone belongs in the community of God. There is a place and there is love for all people who come face to face with Christians and with our church. Due to that sense of belonging, they are presented with a faith and a God worthy of believing in. And in doing so, they become more like what God created them to be.
 - When you look at these two journeys, which one would you say most people are presented with when they look at the Church nowadays? How does loving like Jesus as a church (Calvary) and as individuals change the way that people see Christians and Jesus?

Wrap Up

*Reminder: **We Love Like Jesus.*** To be on mission with Jesus, we must strive each and every day to love people like Jesus loves people. Everything that we are called to do is rooted in this love and the way that we show that to people. When we do not lead with love, we are not leading with Jesus and therefore not leading people to Jesus. But when we decide to take Jesus as His word and trust in the power of who He says He is, we are able to see people like He does and demonstrate the truth of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

Challenge for the Week: This week, identify one person in your life who might feel like an outsider or who is going through a difficult time. Reach out to them with a simple act of love or kindness, such as a phone call, a note of encouragement, or an offer to spend time together. Show them the love of Jesus.

Prayer: Close in prayer by thanking God for His unconditional love and asking for His guidance to love others as Jesus loves us. Pray for the courage to approach Jesus with our needs and for the strength to be His hands and feet in the world, showing love to everyone we encounter.