

SPEAKER: Ryan Lingbloom

DATE: May 18, 2025

SERIES: Upside Down

Sermon Title

“Upside Down Relationships”

Introduction

This week, we continued our series called “**Upside Down**”. Throughout this series, we are unpacking the things Jesus taught that at first glance are not just counter-cultural, but seemingly counterintuitive. Much of what Jesus said seems backwards and confusing and it's easy for us to write those off as things we cannot apply to our lives. But when we actually see the truth of what Jesus said and see what happens when we put those things into practice, we notice that letting Jesus turn our world **Upside Down** brings about so many great things that God wants for us. To get started this week, answer this icebreaker question with your group:

- Who is a person in your life that you would say loves people the best? What do they do that makes them stand out to you?

Seek the Word

Read Matthew 5:33-37 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- What does Jesus mean when He says, “Let your yes be yes and your no be no?”
- What does this teaching on Upside Down Integrity look like in practice when it comes to our relationships?

Read Matthew 5:38-42 aloud, then answer the questions below:

- How does Jesus’ teaching in this passage challenge the concept of justice as we/the world understand it today?
- Why is choosing Upside Down Grace easy/difficult for you in your relationships?

Read Matthew 5:43-47 aloud, then answer the questions below: (Upside Down Love: loving your enemies isn’t a good idea, it is a GOSPEL idea)

- How does the command to love your enemies reflect the nature of God’s love for us?
- “Loving your enemies” and “praying for those who persecute you” seem to be qualifiers of children of God, yet that is not often our first instinct. How do these two things play into our personal relationship with God?

Going Deeper

- Reflect on a time when you struggled to show grace or love to someone who wronged you. Consider the depth of the relationships and the level of hurt you felt. What held you back from showing grace and love in that circumstance, and what was the impact to that relationship because of it?

Talk About It

- How does living with “Upside Down Integrity” differ from simply maintaining a good image in front of others? Why is this important in the Kingdom of God?
- Talk as a group about how the sermon defined the concept of “Upside Down Grace”. How does choosing grace over revenge create opportunities for transformation in relationships?
- When was the last time you prayed for your enemy? How can the practice of praying for our enemies change our perspective and attitude towards them.

Wrap Up

Reminder: Integrity. Grace. Love. This is how Jesus commands us to approach our relationships. Although the world operates from different standards and rules, Jesus came and turned all of our notions **Upside Down** and told us that we ought to be different. Our approach to the people in our lives needs to reflect the values of Jesus who tells us to love our enemies and treat people with patience and honesty. Surrendering our relationships to Christ’s **Upside Down** teachings pushes us to be a people living differently, and shows others the power of living and loving like Jesus.

Challenge for the Week: L.O.V.E

1. **Lift Up:** Identify someone you find challenging to love and lift them up in prayer
2. **Open Up:** Choose a specific prayer focus for their needs
3. **Vow:** Commit to praying for them daily
4. **Engage:** Show kindness and demonstrate your growing love and compassion

Prayer: Close your group time by praying together, asking God for the strength and courage to live out His teachings in Matthew 5. Pray for integrity in your words and actions, grace in your interactions, and love for those who may be difficult to love. Ask for his guidance in transforming your hearts to reflect His kingdom values.