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LUKE

Luke 6:27-42

How can we become the Christ-centered church our world so desperately needs? Join us in Luke's Gospel, the most expansive biography of Jesus in the Bible. With the beloved physician as our guide, we hope to experience Jesus so we can participate with the new reality God is bringing into our world.

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The Big Idea

Love covers a multitude of wrongs done against us. 1. Love your enemies; 2. Do not judge; 3. Don't be a hypocrite.

Good to Know

- Luke 6:27-42 is a continuation of Jesus' "Sermon on the Plain," where He lays out one of the most countercultural aspects of His Kingdom—love for enemies.
- While many Jewish and pagan authors paid lip service to a kind of "golden rule," the motivation behind that was often to get a "leg up" on their enemies.
- Only Jesus commanded His followers to make concrete, tangible acts of sacrificial love a fundamental standard of behavior for God's people. Why? Because that's the kind of love God has for us.

Why did Luke include this?

- By the time Luke wrote his Gospel, Christians were already experiencing serious opposition—ostracized from Jewish communities, hated by Roman authorities and often mistreated by their own neighbors. Jesus' teaching about loving enemies, refusing retaliation and forgiving freely would have been a direct challenge to those suffering injustice. How tempting it must have been to strike back!
- Luke wanted his audience to remember: The Jesus movement doesn't spread through vengeance. It spreads through self-giving love.
- **"Strikes you on the cheek" (vs. 29)** is probably referring to an insulting smack across the face with the back of a hand. In Luke's day, this was a common way for civic and religious leaders to publicly punish Christians who followed Jesus (see Acts 18:17, 23:2), where the Old Testament taught tit-for-tat retribution (e.g. eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth," Deuteronomy 19:21), Jesus told His followers to not even seek retribution.
- **The "cloak" (vs. 29)** is likely a "himation," which was an outer garment that looked like a robe. While a tunic was like an undershirt, cloaks were often taken as a late fee for an unpaid loan. Exodus 22:25-27 commanded lenders to return cloaks to poor borrowers by sunset. Jesus' command was not just that people would radically self-sacrifice, but also that they would depend completely on God's provision!
- **"Even sinners love those who love them" (vs. 32)** – Jesus was pointing out that generosity that was motivated by a desire for getting something back, wasn't really unique or special. What was special, however, was the love of Jesus that is poured out for the pure sake of others.

- **“Lend, expecting nothing in return” (vs. 35)** wasn’t a command against repayment. Jesus was addressing the hypocrisy of His own people who would technically obey the Old Testament laws of not charging fellow Jews interest on loans, but still sneakily remind people of what they “owed them” for their generosity.
- **“Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful” (vs. 36)** was not a new command, but was deeply rooted in the Old Testament (see Exodus 34:6 and Psalm 86:15).
- **Pressed down, shaken together, running over (vs. 38)** is a reference to how a generous grain seller would not just fill a bag with the bare minimum of grain, but would squish it down to fit as much as she possibly could and then some!
- **The “plank” (vs. 41)** is the Greek word “dokos,” which is a huge beam used to support a roof. No doubt, the crowd would have laughed at this zinger by Jesus and His point about how we so often hold others to a higher standard than ourselves would have been made strikingly clear.
- **“Hypocrite” (vs. 42)** is not an English word; it’s the actual Greek term Luke used. Hypocrites were actors who performed in the streets and amphitheaters throughout the Greek-speaking world.

Group Guide

Following the series with your group?

- Start with some [icebreaker questions](#).
- Read the passage together before you dive in.
- Share any insights from the message. Use the questions below to get your conversation started.

Conversation Starters

1. Jesus commands us to “love our enemies” (vs. 27). What would it look like for you to think of the person you know who you’re tempted to be nasty toward, and to lavish on them instead?
2. Is it really possible to do all of the things Jesus commands in this passage? What do you think Jesus is giving us here? A checklist to manage or a target to aim for?
3. In verse 30, Jesus says, “Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back.” How does this challenge your perspective on generosity and personal rights?
4. “For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you” (v. 38). If God applied your standard of judgment toward others back on you, how would you feel?
5. What’s one practical way you can show love to someone who is difficult for you this week?
6. What is one way you can grow in showing mercy instead of judgment this week?
7. What’s your plan for when you inevitably fail to live up to Jesus’ impossibly high standards this week?

Prayer

Jesus, you called together a community of ordinary, broken people to carry out your extraordinary mission. Help us reorient our lives to reflect your heart for the poor, the hungry and the outcast. Strip away any love of comfort, success or reputation that hinders us from fully following you. Teach us to embrace the radical, beautiful, sacrificial life you modeled for us. Amen.

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