

Servolution Part 2

“Serving Outsiders”

Last week I mentioned that Jesus often said things that were so odd. Here is one of them:

Matthew 5:43-48 NLT - *You have heard the law that says, “Love your neighbor” and hate your enemy. v.44 But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! v.45 In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. v.46 If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. v.47 If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. v.48 But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.*

Understand the context in which Jesus spoke. For the most part, the Jews hated the Romans. They were an oppressed people under the control and domination of the Roman Empire. The scribes and the religious leaders actually taught the Jews that they were only required by the Torah to love their brothers within their Jewish Community!

Jesus is challenging their built-in prejudices... He says your enemies need to be loved. Love them mercifully the way God loves you.

Luke 10:25-29 NLT - *One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: “Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?” v.26 Jesus replied, “What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?” v.27 The man answered, “ ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.’ And, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ” v.28 “Right!” Jesus told him. “Do this and you will live!” v.29 The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”*

It is in this context that Jesus tells the famous and inspiring story of the Good Samaritan. Jesus told them how a Jewish man was attacked by bandits, robbed and left for dead. A priest walked by the poor man and crossed the road and walked by him on the other side. Then, a Levite walked by and he too crossed on the other side. But, then a Samaritan, whom the Jews treated as outsiders, saw the man and he stopped and rescued the dying man.

So Jesus made it clear to the expert theologian that the Samaritan was the neighbor.

Luke 6:27 NLT - *But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. v.28 Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you.*

v.35-36 - *Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. v.36 You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate.*

To Jesus, the neighbor who needs love was the one outside of family, outside of the Kingdom. The ones who need to be loved were the one who were easy to reject or to dismiss or to even hate.

We are taught to love the outsiders by serving them because we were at one time outside, looking in!

Ephesians 2:11-13 - *Don't forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders. You were called "uncircumcised heathens" by the Jews... v.12 In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship... and you did not know the covenant promises God had made... You lived in this world without God and without hope. v.13 But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near...*

So should we care about outsiders?

Christianity is a soul-winning, out-reaching, people-loving, family-serving, rescuing faith, or it is not true Christianity. We need to be reminded of this!

When we lose our passion for loving the world around us with the love of Jesus, we lose sight of Jesus!

LETS START A SERVOLUTION BY SERVING THE OUTSIDERS

Colossians 4:5-6 - *Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. v.6 Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

How Can We Best Serve Outsiders?

3 Ways to Serve Outsiders:

1) Wise Behavior

Verse 5: "Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders."

a) Wisdom is knowing things in your spirit.

- i) Wisdom is knowing how to become all things to all men without compromising holiness and truth.

Wisdom is knowing what to do for the glory of God when the rule book runs out.

- ii) Wisdom is using creativity and tact and thoughtfulness when sharing God's love.

b) Three primary sources of wisdom:

- i) The Scriptures
- ii) Prayer: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God."
- iii) Sound counselors.

Proverbs 15:22 - *Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.*

Seek out some counsel from trusted counselors before you over reach.

2) Salty Speech

Verse 6 - *Let your conversation [your speech] always be gracious, seasoned with salt.*

- a) Make the Christian life appetizing to uninterested people.

When food is not salted, it tastes bland. People don't want to eat it. It's unappetizing. Our speech is not supposed to be like that.

What we say about Christ and the Christian life should be made as appetizing as possible.

- b) Remind yourself from Scripture everyday why the gospel tastes good to you.

If your Christianity is no longer tasty to your spirit, how can you make it appetizing to others?

It's hard to salt your speech with the deliciousness of Jesus when you haven't been enjoying the taste yourself.

- c) Use kind, caring words!

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3) Individual Attention

Verse 6b - ... *so that you may know how you ought to answer **everyone**.*

- a) Here is the truth: each person is different and each situation is different. The message of the Kingdom is the same, because Christ is the same, but there are countless ways to serve the meal. We need wisdom to know how to serve it and how to season it.

- b) A couple of ways to give individual attention to outsiders:

- i) Recognize the Passion/Compassion Principle.

Being a part of ASC for several years now, I've been inspired by this principle in action.

Powerful things happen when you mix your passions with compassion for others.

- ii) Let your passion/compassion result in practical actions = servolution

Practical actions result from real life experiences.

Hebrews 5:14 - *But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.*