

Study 7

Radical Lifestyle

Luke 6:27-49

Introduction

The Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi was exposed to Christianity in India, England and South Africa. He admired the teachings of Jesus, and the life of Jesus, and the example of Jesus. But after years of observing Christians, he concluded, "For me to believe in their redeemer, their lives must show they are redeemed." And because he saw so few Christians putting their faith into action, he never became a Christian. The teaching of Jesus has a radical cutting edge – it demands a lifestyle that is noticeably different from the world around us. And from what we saw last time, who on earth would want to sign up with Jesus? As he speaks to the crowd of followers on the hillside, the first thing he tells them is that following him is going to be tough. They'd be treated unfairly, they'd be despised, they'd be hated and insulted, just like their leader. And while they face all that, they're called to be loving and gracious, and generous and fair... what kind of deal is that?

1. Describe someone you know who is serious about being like Jesus.
2. What sort of things stop you being like this yourself?
3. Read verses 27 to 36. List the things Jesus says ORDINARY SINNERS will do for one another.

4. Now make a contrasting list of the things FOLLOWERS OF JESUS will do...

5. What motivation does Jesus give for "doing the impossible" like this?

6. How, and why, will this show our family resemblance as "children of the Most High"?

It's a big ask, isn't it? But notice, LOVE IS NOT A FEELING... it's an ACTION. It's a determination to do what's best for others, no matter how they've treated you. What's the point of saying we follow Jesus if we aren't going to actually be DIFFERENT! Talk about some of the things that make this incredibly hard to put into practice. Then work out ways we can encourage one another to keep at it!

The danger of being Picky...

Read verses 37 to 42.

7. How do the words of Jesus in v37-38 contrast the example of the Pharisees at the start of the chapter?

8. According to verses 39-41, what problem do people like the Pharisees face?

It's ironic – so often Christians are seen to be exactly like the Pharisees who Jesus is speaking against! How can we prevent this?

A Falling House

9. Read verses 43-45. Which tree would you rather be?

10. Read verses 46 to 49. What should you do?

As we'll see when this series continues, even though Israel has come to bring blessing to Israel, there's an ongoing problem. He'll be rejected, and ultimately put to death. And the house of Israel will ultimately fall. But even then, he's calling for forgiveness for his tormentors; he's weeping over the hardness of Jerusalem; he's praying for God's mercy not on himself, but on others. Even 'sinners' love those who love them back. Followers of Jesus love even their enemies. How are **you** going to put these words of Jesus into practice? Who are **you** going to love?

Pray together – for God's help in being different, especially in the way we love and forgive.

News and Information:

Preaching this Sunday – Phil on Luke 6

Growth Group Next week – end of term Social Event

Preaching Sunday 24th – Bryson Smith; also at Celebration Rally