

Forsaking Family To Follow Jesus

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- [0 : 00] I'm going to preach on the topic of forsaking family to follow Jesus.! Forsaking family to follow Jesus. There's a lot of hard sayings Jesus has. This is one of them.
- ! Most of my text, the majority of my text is going to come from Luke 14. So I'm going to read this passage and riff on it for a little bit. And then I have some supplementals to follow.
- But the bulk of my passage is Luke 14. So I'm going to turn there. I'm just going to read it. So Luke 14. If you have a Bible, I encourage you to go ahead and open it.
- We'll read through this here. It's a little bit of a longer section, so I don't want to lose people by just reading it out loud. Luke chapter 14, starting in verse 12.
- This is Jesus. He's at a dinner. Okay. He, meaning Jesus, he said also to the man who had invited him, When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends, or your brothers, or your relatives, or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid.
- [1 : 18] But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.
- When one of those who were applying to table with him heard these things, he said to him, Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God. But he said to him, But he said to him, A man once gave a great banquet and invited many.
- And at the time for the banquet, he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, Come, for everything is now ready. But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it.
- Please have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.
- So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and the crippled and blind and lame.
- [2 : 28] And the servant said, Sir, what you have commanded has been done, and still there is room. And the master said to the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.
- For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. I'm going to pause there. I'm going to continue this here. But I think this sets great context.
- There's a verse I want to focus on. It's going to come in this next section. But I think everything we just read sets a really helpful context for what Jesus is about to say. And the context is, he gives a call to mission.
- So you guys, when you're hospitable, when you're giving a feast, don't focus on people who are going to repay you, essentially.

People you're comfortable with. You know? You pat each other's backs, relationally speaking. Okay? It's a give and tip. Use it for people who have nothing to give you.

[3 : 35] It's a call to mission. It's essentially, use what you've been given, not to benefit yourself with these familiar, comfortable relationships that, basically, they feed you.

Instead, use it to further the gospel. It's my interpretation of what he's saying here. Okay. And then someone says, you know, yeah, blessed be, you know, anyone who eats in the kingdom of God.

And he gives this wonderful example, a parable of this great banquet. And he reiterates the same thing. But this time you see the introduction of excuses.

The first people he invites, they all by one consent begin to make excuses. Verse 18 and 20. And you see that the excuses are good things. They're not bad things.

They're not, I got to go gamble at the casino. You know? I got to go fornicate. You know? Sorry, please excuse me from the kingdom of God. I got to go live in licentiousness. No, no. It's just like, hey, I got a job.

[4 : 45] You know, I'm too busy, man. Or I have a wife. These are good things. These are God things. These are things that God commands us. First of all, he gives these things. They're good.

They're not sinful. And then he commands us to be faithful with them. Okay? But these are the things that are given as an excuse for not answering the call to this banquet.

Which is a picture of eternal life in Christ. And also the fellowship of his mission. You know? So, that's the context.

I'm going to continue on here. Verse 25. Now great crowds accompanied him. And he turned and said to them, If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, Yes, and even his own life, Yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you desiring to build a tower does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it. Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish.

[5 : 57] Or what king going out to encounter another king in war will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able to 10,000 to meet him who comes against him with 20,000? And if not, while the others get a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace.

So, therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple. So, the main text that I'm going to focus on is verse 26.

If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, Yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. But I think the rest of that passage is important, too, because you see this imagery of basically setting out to do a big thing, and you can't finish this thing because you didn't count the cost at the front end.

You didn't meet the prerequisites. You kicked that decision down the road, okay? Ah, that's kind of hard. I'm going to kick that one down the road, okay?

I'm going to try to follow Jesus, and I'll work out, you know, this whole really kind of weird thing he says about hating your family and not being able to follow Jesus unless you hate your family and your own life.

- [7 : 11] That's, I don't know, that's kind of hard. I'll kick that down the road. I'll believe in Jesus. I'll go on serving the kingdom, preaching the gospel, be part of the church, and I don't know. Eventually, I'll understand.
- I'll cross that bridge when I get there. Guess what? You won't finish. That's the point of the passage. If you don't count the cost on the front end, you're not finishing, man.
- It's impossible, okay? There's something weighty about what he's saying here that you can't get around, okay? Every Christian's got to deal with this. So, anyway, that's going to be the purpose of my sermon is to deal with this and to think through this and try to understand what is it Jesus is talking about and how does it apply to our life, okay?
- So, what's going on in verse 26? This just seems so contradictory to so much in the New Testament about loving our families, divine order, priorities.
- Like, what is, like, we're supposed to love everybody, right? Why does Jesus say you got to hate these people who are the closest to you? I'm going to read a couple passages that I think kind of shed light on this.
- [8 : 19] First is Psalm 17, verse 13 through 15. This is David speaking of men of this world. Arise, O Lord, confront him, subdue him.
- Deliver my soul from the wicked by your sword, from men by your hand, O Lord, from men of the world whose portion is in this life. You fill their womb with treasure.
- They are satisfied with children, and they leave their abundance to their infants. Okay, so I'm going to pause there. That's speaking of men of this world, the wicked.
- It doesn't say anything about gross sin. What he's speaking of is what they value, okay?
- What are their basic values? What are the basic values of people in this world who are wicked, who are alienated from the life of God, whose inheritance is not in the next life, but whose inheritance is in this life?
- [9 : 19] Children. They leave their abundance for their infants. They have good inheritances for their kids. They think about their kids. They think about their grandkids.
- This is where their value system, this is where their heart is. She's like, okay, those are good things, right? Okay, well, what's David, the righteous man? Like, where's his value system at?
- He shares it. He goes on to say, David has a different thing on his heart.
- Him. The Lord. So, in other words, men of this world say family is number one. Okay? It's number one.
- Family is everything. A Christian says God's number one. A believer has made an exchange of affections that rule the seat of their heart.
- [10 : 25] They have a totally different worldview that has been renewed by the Holy Spirit, where Jesus has preeminence. And it doesn't eliminate family.
- It doesn't eliminate value from family or any of those things. But it transforms it to be Christ-centered. So, anyway, I think that's a good verse. Romans 1.25 says, They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and they worshiped and served the creature rather than the creator, who is blessed forever.
- It's a form of idolatry to love God's creation and to worship God's creation above and beyond him. This is an evidence of our idolatrous nature, is that we creature worship.
- Okay? And we extra creature worship with the things that are more and more valuable to us. And family is a big one. It's baked in. It's in our hard code. This is like foundational value system is me and my own.

Okay? And it's good. That's why it's so hard to argue with. Okay? Christians are known for being family-centric and for holding family in high esteem. But that's kind of a catch-22, because then you can have this idolatry just live on and permeate and never go addressed.

[11 : 43] And so Jesus just hits this head on. This is, I believe this is what he's getting at, basically. He's getting at this prioritization of family in our hearts over and above the preeminence of Christ.

So, Romans goes on to say in that same chapter that these people, these same people who worshipped and served the creature rather than the creator, says that though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them, but give approval to those who practice them.

So, I believe this is what Jesus is hammering. He doesn't give any qualifications to it. He just says you have to need your family. And you're kind of left with this shock of like, how do I interpret that?

You know? But it's shocking for a reason. And I think I've read a lot of different interpretations of this passage. And I don't, we got to be careful with it.

There's a way of handling, like even how we define hate. A lot of people who handle this passage will just try to redefine hate, you know? It's like, well, it's relative love, you know?

[12 : 50] It's loving Jesus way more than you love your family, but you still got to love your family. And I get what they're saying, but there's something about letting Jesus' word just hit like he says it.

And it cuts and it exposes what's going on in our heart. And I guess I do have some thoughts on how this is exegeted a little bit, but I think it's important for us to realize that Jesus didn't qualify what he said.

He just said, he said, hey, if you love your family more than me, you are not worthy of being my disciple. If you come after me and you don't hate your family, you're not worthy of being my disciple.

And I think just for sake of, you know, capturing the spirit of it, friends and family, okay? Those who are near and dear to us, the relationships in our life that are right here, okay? They're the ones I can't live without.

You got to realize that the Lord's going to go right for it, okay? And to follow Jesus, you got to let it go. You got to let it go. That's what he's pointing to. Okay, I am way behind here.

[13 : 57] Okay. So what's the solution? The fact of the matter is we're all in this. This is basic idolatry.

This is, we're born into this idolatry. Not a single person in this room is excluded from this. This is not something that's just like, oh, yeah, you know, you know, Michael just really deals with the family idolatry part and Judah doesn't, you know?

No. This is just like, he's speaking to all of the people in the world because Adam, our natural father that we all came from, he has this value system.

Remember, who did he choose over God? Eve. So we got it honest, all right? Everybody's in the same boat. How do we get out of this boat?

Do we just try to pray this away, you know? Do we try to fast and pray the idolatry out of our heart? I mean, it's good to fast and pray and seek the Lord for freedom in these things. There's a much more foundational solution that the Lord has.

[14 : 54] And it is the gospel. There's the aspect of the gospel that deals with this. I'm going to share a few verses on this. 2 Corinthians 5, verse 14 through 17. For the love of Christ controls us because we've concluded this, that one has died for all, therefore all have died.

And he died for all that those who live might no longer live for themselves, but for him who for their sake died and was raised. So when Jesus died, we died.

Okay? So this old idolatrous person that we got from our dad, that we got organically, that we didn't ask for, but we just came into the world being that person who just idolizes family above and beyond the Lord and everything, he died.

When Jesus died, that person died. And if you're in Christ, this is true for you. So you already got it, basically, is my point. You have a solution already. Your old man was crucified with him, is what it says in Romans 6.

He was crucified. He's dead. Therefore, when we go on, from now on, therefore, continuing in that 2 Corinthians 5 passage, in light of this truth, we regard no one according to the flesh.

[16 : 07] Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone's in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away, the new has come.

Jesus set us free from this. Okay? He took away the old man who is completely enslaved to this worldview, and he made a new creation. And that new creation is part of a new family.

It says in Colossians 1, 17 through 18, he, meaning Jesus, is before all things, and in him all things fold together. And he's the head of the body of the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.

Another way of saying preeminent is first place. Some translations render it that, that he might have first place in everything. So, the Lord dealt with this problem 2,000 years ago on the cross.

Okay? That is the solution to our present problem, is to recognize and believe this to be true. That when Jesus died, I died and I was crucified to my earthly relationships as they are sinful and warped and messed up by the fall.

[17 : 20] in such a way that the power of it to rule my heart and my mind and my affections has been totally crucified on the cross of Jesus.

And when Jesus rose from the dead, he rose me and all of you who are in Christ up with him and he's first. He has first place.

He just is. Okay? So, he already has first place, I guess is the point. Okay? We don't have to make Jesus have first place. He has first place and he fought us and we have no rights to let anything else have first place in our life.

He's king. He has total dominion. The surrender is an unconditional surrender. He died for all so that all who live would no longer live for themselves but for him.

So, he purchased us. That's the point. He purchased us and now we're his. Okay? So, nothing else in our life gets to have second place with Jesus. Especially, it doesn't get to have first place but it doesn't even get to have second place.

[18 : 28] It's destroyed. It's last place. It's hatred. Okay? It's hatred. It's anything. It's in the context of anything that competes with the Lord Jesus Christ on the seat of my affections.

I violently put it to death knowing that Jesus already did. It took Jesus dying to set me free from that.

If I didn't do anything else in the world and I just treasured my family above the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ would have had to suffer in the agony of hell on the cross for my sin because it's such a wicked thing to do.

It's wicked. It's so wicked. And it doesn't seem so bad, right? Because family's good. It's bad. If we saw Jesus, you know, I'm confident that so many things that we just don't think are that big a deal, when we see Jesus, we're going to immediately see just our mouth is going to be stopped.

We're going to be so thankful that he paid for our sins. But sins like these, I think, are going to magnify and we're going to be able to see and understand how jacked up this was. We'll look back through time and see Adam choosing his wife over God, eating that fruit.

[19 : 45] And we'll see, oh no, Lord, it's really wicked. Nothing comes close to Jesus. It's not even a shadow. Anything that even comes close to Jesus in my heart, it's a wicked sin.

Lord, help me hate that, run from that. Give me grace to escape this, you know, reset my values in my heart before you. Okay, so basically, that's it.

The solution is the gospel. Okay? When Jesus died, he did everything. There are so many aspects of the Christian life that tie directly back to what Jesus did on the cross. He paid for our sins.

That's awesome. The blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. But he did a lot more than that too. He destroyed the power of sin to rule our life on the cross. He put the whole thing to death. That man of sin was buried.

And when he rose from the dead, a new creation rose from the dead. We're seated in the heavenly places with Jesus. And in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, none of us has an idolatry problem with family.

[20 : 40] Okay? And then the Holy Spirit is ministering that finished work progressively in our life as we follow Jesus. May your kingdom come and will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And in this area, the fruit of sanctification looks like Jesus increasingly having preeminence. And our natural way of relating to family getting renewed.

Okay? So, I want to talk through a little bit of the fruit of that. Yeah. Okay. What results can we expect if we believe this truth?

If we apprehend this, the Holy Spirit's making this truth a reality in our life, what fruits, what tangible evidence should we expect to see in our life? I'm just going to walk through some examples.

I didn't make any of these up. These are just examples pulled from the Bible. Number one, what we've been talking about, Jesus has first place in our affections. Okay? 2 Corinthians 11, verse 2 through 3, Paul said, I feel a divine jealousy for you since I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.

[21 : 49] But I'm afraid as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts would be led astray from the sincere and pure devotion to Christ. A sincere and pure devotion to Christ just springs up.

Okay? Disorder in this area dials down our sense of affection for Jesus. It clouds it. We're like Martha just worried about so many things.

It's good to pray for your family. It's good to be concerned with your family. There's a right way of doing it, but not in such a way where Jesus loses first place in our heart. You know? If we've lost that, Jesus says the one thing is equal.

Okay? That's what Paul's concerned about for this group. So, what's a fruit when we believe this truth? Jesus has first place in our heart. Second, you will experience division and conflict in your natural family relationships.

There's no getting around it. Okay? Jesus says in Matthew 10 verse 34 through 42, Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

[22 : 54] Where specifically? For I came to set a man against his father and a daughter against her mother and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law and a man's enemies will be the members of his household.

All right. So, not only is he not going to bring peace, he's not going to bring peace specifically within families. Okay? He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.

He who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Yeah, it sounds familiar. It's like a parallel passage. And he who does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. He who has found his life will lose it.

He who has lost his life for my sake will find it. He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me. He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward.

And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. You see the flip that he does with priorities?

[23 : 54] Those of you in your family who receive what you have to say because it's because of me, because of Jesus, not because you're their family member, because they're your best friend, but because you're a disciple of Jesus, they're receiving me.

If they don't, though, hey, that's part of the game. That's part of the deal. Don't be surprised. I didn't come to come make your earthly family a hoorah, we're all getting along sort of deal.

Actually, I came to bring division because I love those people and their sin was sending them to hell. And if you love their good opinion of you more than you love their eternal soul, you're not willing to be.

So, Jesus loves people and he saves them by convincing them of sin and the wrath to come so that they escape through the only escape that's possible, which is his atonement on the cross.

And if we love our family members, we're going to share that with them too. That brings division. There's no way around it. But that's how people get saved. You know, so my dad got saved. His sister shared the gospel with them.

[25 : 14] Not everyone else in their family received it, but he did. Okay, next. Also related to family, number three.

Limited ministry effectiveness in our extended family at least over the short term. All right, where am I getting this from? I'm getting it from Jesus. Matthew chapter 13 verse 57 through 58.

Speaking of Jesus, it says, and they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, a prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and his own household. And he did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

There's a bunch of other examples of this. They're in all the gospels, basically, except for John. There's some different examples. But basically, Jesus started with his family as a priority, was not effective in the short term, though.

He didn't get to see fruit from his short term ministry to his extended family. In fact, the opposite. They didn't believe in him. They mocked him. And in his hometown, they tried to throw him off a cliff.

[26 : 16] So, did he prioritize them according to God's word? Yes, he did. He shared the truth with them first. That's our example. We share the truth with those who are closest to us first.

Did they receive him? No. In fact, the opposite. You know, that phrase, familiarity breeds contempt. It comes from this. It says, no prophet is without honor except in his own family and his hometown among his relatives, the people who know you the most.

So, my question for you is, are you expecting something different than Jesus? Do you have a more inflated view of your winsomeness than you ought to have?

I mean, I know I do. I've been totally just like deluded into thinking that I'm somehow more winsome than the Lord Jesus Christ. Okay? You're not. We're not. If, Jesus says, a disciple, when he's perfect, will be like his master.

So, when we're perfect, meaning when we're mature, the best we can get is like Jesus. So, we need to recalibrate our expectations based on what the Bible says.

[27 : 27] Later on, a lot of them did believe. Two of them wrote books in the New Testament. James was one of his brothers. Jude was one of his brothers. But it might not have even been until after he rose from the dead.

Okay? So, the Lord saves people. We don't save people. Our job is to testify to the truth and do it faithfully, even if it causes division and shaking our precious family peace.

If we love Jesus more than we love our precious family peace, we'll be okay doing it. Because you know he's trying to do it. If he loves them, which we trust he does, that's what he's trying to do.

And if we're going to be faithful to Jesus, we participate in this work of this is what the Bible says. Okay? Sinners hate it. Just remember how you have behaved when people have called you out about your sin.

Okay? There's been a lot of people who've suffered a lot of my backlash and my tood and my foul speaking because they love me and they confronted me in my sin.

[28 : 30] There's people in this room who've done it. Okay? God uses it. Okay? Okay. Number four, our family might get mad at us and that's okay. That's really kind of just a repeat.

Five, there's freedom. If we obey this reordering of priorities, Jesus number one, there's freedom to follow Jesus unhindered wherever he wants us to go.

So I'm going to read an example of this. Jesus calling the apostles. Matthew 4, verse 18 through 22. And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea for they were fishers.

And he saith unto them, follow me and I will make you fishers of men. And straight away they left their nets and followed them. And going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee, their father.

See the familial connection here? They're working and they're doing it with their dad. Mending their nets and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father and followed him.

[29 : 36] Okay? So, this is a type in the shadow. You see other people in the other example we read in Luke 14 getting called but refusing the call because of family.

Here you see the disciples doing completely the opposite. Okay? He says, hey, come follow me. They don't say, oh, but I got to honor my dad. Oh, I got this job I'm doing with my dad.

You know, my dad's, you know, he's going to be out of luck. He's not going to be able to do his job. Right? I don't want to dishonor my dad. No, no, no. Jesus has preeminence. He says, follow me. They left it and they followed him.

So, Jesus gets to call the shots. He's just the boss. He's the boss of everything. So, he has preeminence over our callers.

Okay? So, a natural byproduct is we're just free. Okay? We're free to go obey Jesus in whatever he's called us to do. And, if what he calls us to do conflicts with some of our family priorities, we need to get a renewed mind because he's never going to call us to do something that disobeys him with respect to our family obligations.

[30 : 39] Um, number six. What else do we get? What are the evidences? Uh, we get new family relationships in the church. Mark 10, verse 29 through 31, Jesus says, truly I say to you, there's no man that has left house or brethren or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for my sake and the gospels that shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and lands with persecutions.

And the world to come eternal life. And in Mark 3, uh, 33 through 35, he said, uh, who are my mother and brothers? And looking at those who sat around him, he said, here are my mother and brothers.

Forever does the will of God. He is my brother and sister and mother. All right. So, uh, we leave our natural family and we get a spiritual family. We're not going to have our natural family in heaven.

You know what we're going to have? We're going to have our spiritual family. Okay. So it starts on earth. We get converted. Our tie, our primary familial tie to Adam gets crucified in Christ in the cross.

And he raises us to new life. Who's our new family? What's our primary familial tie? Sons of God through Christ. Our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

[31 : 59] That's the one that's going to last forever. Okay. That's the most prominent identity we have. Does this nullify the family? No. But it's the one that's going to last forever.

You know, Julie and I aren't going to be married now. The Bible's very clear about that. Jesus says they need to marry nor give them marriage in the resurrection. So this is the family that's going to last. And guess what? When we cut ties with the old one, we get the new one and it's glorious.

It's a really precious thing. Now there's extremes with all this stuff as there is with everything in the Bible. There's weird ways that going with this, but it's a glorious truth.

It's a wonderful truth. One of the words this year is family, like specifically church family, not talking about like family, natural family. It's church family. I think this is one of the truths that we need to internalize a little bit more.

I know I do. This is something I'm chief of offenders in this, prioritizing my family over spiritual family, but it ought not be so. Okay. So related to that, number seven, an ability to relate according to the spirit, not to the flesh.

[33 : 03] We already read that verse from 2 Corinthians 5 about in light of this exchange that happened on the cross, this crucifixion of the old man and this resurrection of the new man. We don't regard people according to the flesh anymore.

We look at it with spiritual eyes. Okay. When we look at believers, we're saying, they're a new creation in Christ. In spite of all their besetting sin and things God's sanctifying them in, the primary way I'm going to relate to them is they're my brother and sister in Jesus and in Christ, they're perfect.

And they're going to last forever and I'm going to last forever and our fellowship is forever. And it's just this glorious thing. And if we relate to each other from that vantage point, we got way more margin for each other.

Love covers a multitude of sins. I'm not just like, but this sin is so bad, I can't handle it until it's fixed. You know, like that's viewing each other according to the flesh. Amen's in Christ.

He's a new creation. Behold, old things have passed away. All things have become new. So I'm going to just believe that. I'm going to set my, I'm going to put a stake, you know, on that.

[34 : 10] I'm going to say, that's how I'm going to view people. By God's grace, please renew my mind. Help me to relate to each other like this. For people who are unbelievers, since Christ died for all, so all who live would no longer live for themselves.

They don't have any right to their life. Okay? I don't need to apologize to them for the gospel and what Jesus has to say. They lost their rights. Okay? They owe Jesus their life.

And I'm here to command them to repent. And I know that they're going to be my brother and sister in this living way if they do so. That's what I want to, I want to have that relationship with them.

I don't want to have relationships with my brothers and sisters where we just sit around avoiding all the controversial things that Jesus says in order to keep peace with them. Okay? Like, if they don't repent and believe in Jesus, they're going to hell.

And I'll never have a relationship with them for eternity. I want to have a new relationship with them. I want to regard them according to the spirit, not according to the flesh. And so there's an aspect in which we can understand, we can look at unbelievers like this and be like, wait a minute, no.

[35 : 14] They need to be transformed, you know. I don't want to commiserate with their sin anymore. So, okay, well, I can't get to everything here. There are a few objections to these things.

I'm sure there's a lot more evidences. Those should just be one of them that stood out to me. A few objections I want to speak to. This is one of the hard sayings. I think R.C. Sproul has a book called Hard Sayings. I can't remember if this is in there or not.

I think it is. But anyway, this is a hard say. Luke 14, 26. You got to hate your family. And if you don't, you're not worthy of being Jesus' disciple. Unqualified.

Hard. It's difficult. So, I want to think through a couple objections to speak to them real quick. One is, objection number one, Jesus can't really mean hate, right?

That would contradict all the other commands in the New Testament about love. You know, love, love, love, love. There's love everywhere. How could he possibly mean we're supposed to hate people when we're supposed to love them? Especially our family when we're commanded to give priority to our family in love and affection and service, you know, and all that.

[36 : 18] How do these mesh? Okay. I think there's two senses. We can think of hate in two ways. These are these two that occur to me. Okay. Number one is, consider that also in that passage he said, you.

He said, you have to hate your own life, too. Okay. So, how do we hate our own life? Well, I can think of two ways that I hate my own life. One is, that I know, like Romans 7, 18 says, that in my flesh does no good thing.

Okay. I love Jesus. He saved me. He gave me a new heart. I rejoice after God in the innermost beauty. But I see another principle in me, that when I want to do what's right, there's another force inside of me that sin.

It's important. And I hate that guy. I hate how selfish I am. And I want to be free from it. And I'm confident that the Lord is progressively sanctifying me and giving me increasing victory over that indwelling sin.

I don't, I hate that guy, though. I hate him. Any Christian, if you're a Christian, you know exactly what I'm talking about. If you don't, you might need to become a Christian.

[37 : 33] Because this is evidence of the Holy Spirit as he teaches you to recognize your depravity and hate it. And, in that sense, we hate ourselves.

We say, no, I hate that guy. I don't want to have anything to do with that guy. I, I want to live for Jesus now. He's my life. Okay? So, how does this apply to other people?

Well, they are just as much a sinner as you are. Okay? So, in the same sense in which I hate my own sin, I can also recognize it in my family. And so, you know what? My self-centered, self-preoccupied infatuation with my own desires, that sin, was sending me to hell.

And, they got the same thing and it's sending them to hell. And, I'm not going to have anything to do with it. I'm not going to commiserate with it. I'm not going to sympathize with it. Because, if I sympathize with my own, I'm screwed.

You know? I can't sympathize with it anymore. I have to crucify it. And, they need to crucify it too. And so, I'm going to start having more wisdom with how I relate.

[38 : 46] to their sinful, depraved nature that's pulling them headlong into the pit of hell. And, if they're Christians, they're commanded to be conformed to the image of Jesus.

So, I'm not going to commiserate with their sin because it's preventing them from being conformed to the image of Jesus. So, in neither of those two areas am I going to commiserate with their sin anymore because I don't commiserate with my own.

Okay? That was, I died to him on the cross. So, I'm therefore commanded to mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth in light of the fact that I, it was mortified on the cross by Jesus.

So, that's one sense. Okay? Hating our sinful nature in ourselves and in others and stopping commiserating with them. You know? And, the second is order of morals.

Order of loves. I naturally love myself above everything. That's the basic default human setting.

[39 : 49] Me first. Everyone else can take a hike. That's the default. Clean God. Okay? Well, that's wicked. When God comes into our life, he completely flips it around and it's me first, son.

I'm number one and everything else finds its right place when I'm number one. Okay? So, it's order of affection.

So, in that sense, I hate myself. I say, no, I don't want anything to do with that selfish, self-centered, wicked guy who makes him the God of himself and the God of his whole life.

No. Self off the throne. Jesus on the throne. Well, in the same way, everyone else is the same. Like, they're just, they're preoccupied with themselves, you know?

And so, no, I'm not going to make them, I'm not going to let them be God. And there's a tendency, you know, just, we're not selfless in our affection with our family.

[40 : 51] I guess that's part of the point. This natural affection and connection we have with family, it has to do with self. It's what I get out of my family. It doesn't have anything to do with God and what he gets out of them.

It's all about me. And so, in that sense, I don't know if I'm making that clear, I think I'm bouncing around a little bit. It's, I hate them in the sense that I'm not letting them be chief of my affections anymore.

Just like I don't let myself be the chief of my affection anymore. I don't let my family be the chief of my affection anymore. They both get taken off the throne. Jesus is on the throne. So, anyway, I think that there's two senses in which I think we can say, hey, and I think it maintains the strongness of the language that he uses.

It's actually hate. Okay? It's not, you know, really disparate affections. It's actually hate. Because the two things he's pointing out have to do with idolatry and our depravity.

And we are supposed to hate those and get those completely out of the ruling seat on our hearts. Okay. I'm going to burn through these a little bit faster.

[41 : 57] Okay. Next objection. My first ministry, my primary responsibility is to love and care for my family. How can I obey this command about hitting my family and following Jesus? It seems like a contradiction.

It's not a contradiction because what they actually need is Christ's love. What they need is the Lord Jesus to love them through you. All the commands of the New Testament about loving our family, caring for our family, Ephesians 5, husbands loving your wives, laying down your lives for, wives submitting to your husbands, you know, parents raising your children, children obeying your parents, all this stuff.

It's only, you're only able to obey it through Jesus. Okay. He's the provision for that love and the accomplishing of that commandment. So how it works is we give Jesus first place and he leads us into obedience to all those commandments.

He cares about them way more than we do. So we ought not think that we need to contradict, you know, or set these two commandments against each other. This is actually the fulfillment of it. This is how Jesus fulfills his command to love people by coming inside our selfish heart and loving people.

The delusion is that we think that we can actually love people without God. We don't. Okay. We're selfish. We're super self-centered. We're in it for ourselves. Okay. I will love you and do you good as long as you do me good.

[43 : 21] Okay. That's the extent of self-centered love. As soon as you stop doing me good, you're done. Jesus is not like that. Those whom he loved, he loved to end.

And that's what our family needs. Okay. They don't need our love. The other objection, I've heard this a lot actually, is this only applies to unbelieving families, not believers. All right.

Why would you ever need to hate or forsake your believing family? That has to be in reference to pagans who don't believe in God and because you decide to follow Jesus, you have to, you know, separate.

Well, that's obviously true too, but he doesn't say anything about the quality of these people. He just says, they're family. It has to do with the place they hold in our affections. So, anyway, the last is, I really want my family, you know, unbelieving or unchurched Christians, I want them to follow Jesus and this just doesn't seem like a winsome approach.

Okay. I would encourage us all to consider the example of Jesus. Following Jesus is not just an abstract thing that we just sort of imagine and come up with our own idea of what that looks like.

[44 : 35] We have real examples of what Jesus did. We're commanded to follow his example of what he did.

So, my question is, are you trying to be more winsome than the Lord Jesus Christ with how you approach missions in your family? And if the answer is yes, then you need to repent.

Okay. God's in the business of saving people. We're in the business of obeying Jesus and being faithful. Okay. Sometimes we're trying to do both and then we're forced into compromising for long seasons of time.

I know this from personal experience. Okay. So, that's about it. I'm going to run through a few exhortations. Exhortation number one is specifically for our church, just praying through our church.

I think these are meaningful and they have bearing on us. Number one is we just have to pick family first or Jesus first. Okay. You can't solve doing both.

[45 : 36] You cannot solve that equation. It's an unsolvable equation. you have to pick one or the other. Okay. That's how he calls it out. That's what our response has to be. Second, believers' families are not exempt.

This does not just apply to unbelieving families. This just applies to all Christians and all families. You can have the most God-honoring, gospel-glorifying family on the face of the planet and you still have to do this.

It doesn't matter how good the person is, they're not God. Okay. Jesus, there's only one Jesus. He's Lord of our heart. Okay. So he brings division and he brings it in the best of families.

So let him do it. Second, don't be ashamed of Christ's words and the division they cause. We've already talked about that a lot, but just I want to admonish us not to do that. This is how we, this is how we quench the spirit is by making the primary value for our familial relationships being having a happy, good time without any conflict.

That's not good. Jesus is here to bring conflict for the salvation of all of our souls. Remember all the conflict we had when we got saved. Okay. Like, do we think that that's just magically not going to happen with him?

[46 : 51] Especially when Jesus promises and says, hey, this is how it's going to go. There's going to be conflict. Okay. So we should just be okay with that. I think I'm going to stop.

Those are all the expectations I have. I just won't frame. Okay. Let's go. Thank you.