

A FRIEND OF SINNERS

Christian Attitudes Towards Nonbelievers

- A. Condemning
- B. Unconcerned
- C. _____ to helping them come to faith

Why did Jesus change the world?

Because he _____ people.

Mark 12.37b: And the common people heard him gladly.

Those who were most attracted to Jesus were the ones that polite society referred to as “sinners.”

Mark 1.15: The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the Good News.

There was something about how Jesus said what he said that the people who had the most to feel bad about were the ones who felt _____ about being with him.

Jesus loved, liked and enjoyed people.

Over time they came to trust that he cared for them; and when he talked to them about God, their lives and how they needed to change, they heard him _____.

LOVING PEOPLE LIKE JESUS MEANS

1. BEING A _____ TO PEOPLE WHO NEED GOD.

The Number One reason people start going to a church: someone they know and like (a friend) _____ them to go.

Matthew 11.18-19: John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, “He has a demon.” The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, “Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.”

If we are going to help people come into a relationship with God:

1. We must _____ the way they think.
2. We must like them.

That’s what a friend is – someone who “gets” you and someone who enjoys you.

Question: Are you a friend of sinners?

2. ACCEPTING PEOPLE BEFORE YOU _____ OF THEIR BEHAVIOR.

Luke 15.1-2: Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear him.

But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

Jesus knew:

People don't change when you tell them how bad they are.

People change when you help them feel they can be _____.

People don't change when you tell them they're worthless.

People change when they're told they're worth a _____.

Luke 19.5-7: When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.' "

We think the first thing God wants sinners to do is stop sinning.

But the first thing Jesus wanted sinners to do was experience his _____ – and out of that grace to find the power to say “no” to sin and “yes” to a life of righteousness.

Luke 19.8-10: But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

3. LOOKING FOR THE _____ IN THEIR LIVES.

William James: The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated.

Victor Hugo: We live more by affirmation than we live by bread.

We try to make people feel important because people are _____.

John 1.45-46: “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” “Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked. “Come and see,” said Philip.

John 1.47: When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said, “Here is a true Israelite in whom there is nothing false.”

Jesus could have condemned the negative side of Nathanael's personality.

Instead he appreciated and _____ the good that he could find.

Eventually, Nathanael became one of Jesus' disciples and carried on his message after Jesus was gone.

The Jesus Way: Don't tell people what they should want or how they should change.

Tell them _____.

Tell them with your actions, with your time and with your words.

Mark Twain: Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.

People learned from the way Jesus interacted with them that God is _____ people.

People are supposed to learn the same thing from us.

4. _____ FOR OTHER PEOPLE.

Real love means sacrifice.

At some point real love means giving up some part of your life so someone else can

have real life.

Mark 10.43-45: Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Real ministry is loving people when they're hard to love, sticking with them when they don't seem to make any progress, and not becoming defensive when your motives are misunderstood.

It's laying down your life and going to a _____.

That's what it takes to love and minister the way Jesus did.

It's you and me being willing to suffer, bear burdens that are not our own and dying to ourselves.

That's what is required if we are going to become like our Master Teacher Jesus and become the men we were created to be.