
SERMON NOTES March 5, 2023

Today's notes also available at CCPL.life/Connect

**Matthew 10:34-42
Our Greatest Good
Pastor Mike**

Opening question; What is your _____

I. The _____ of Jesus

II. The prince of peace who _____

a. Jesus' assertion of _____

b. Jesus' demand of our _____

III. The God of Love who _____

a. Not hate _____, but _____

The problem isn't loving people _____, but loving God _____

b. What is our _____

Is God our ultimate good or a _____ to some _____

c. Finding our worth in _____

IV. _____ our life to _____

V. Pursuing the _____ of the greatest good

Questions for reflection, application, and discussion

1. Jesus' words in the end of Matthew 10 are harsh, and to many, even offensive. In verse 34-35 he says, *"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword,"* and, *"I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother"*
 - a. The Bible teaches that Jesus is the prince of peace, and in Colossians 1:20, it teaches that he makes peace by the blood of the cross. What is he teaching here? How can we understand this to be consistent with other passages that talk about love and peace?
 - b. Many in our culture stress Jesus' love and acceptance of people. How is this view of Jesus consistent with the Bible's teaching? How is it contrast with aspects of the Bible's teaching about Jesus? How does this passage challenge this view?
2. Jesus' words in Matthew 10:35-37 seem not only harsh, but contrary to much of what is taught elsewhere in the Bible, and even by Jesus. He teaches that we are to love, but in these verses, he says that *"I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother,"* and, *"Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."*
 - a. What was your honest initial reaction when you read this verse?
 - b. Most people understand that Jesus is teaching that we should love him more than all other relationships, but why did he use such strong language as saying, "I've come to set man against father and daughter against her mother...?"
 - c. In practice, how can we put other relationships above Christ? What should it look like for us to follow this command and love Jesus far more than all these other relationships?
 - d. Practically, what can you do to put Jesus first *in* all your relationships?
3. In his message, Pastor Mike said that the real issue is what we make our greatest good – the thing that we look to for our ultimate happiness and security. Often, we can make other things, even good things like our family, our greatest good. But when we do that, we make God a means that we use to pursue what we practically consider our greatest good.
 - a. How can you know if God is your greatest good – if you really love him more than all other relationships and all other things in life?
 - b. Pastor Mike argued that if God is an important thing in your life, but not the center, not your greatest good, then ultimately you are relating to God as a means to pursuing the greater end of your greatest good. Do you agree? Is this always the case?
4. In verses 37 and 38 of Matthew 10 Jesus teaches, *"Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me."* Is Jesus teaching that loving him more than others and taking up our cross are things we have to do to earn his approval – they make us worthy? If not, what is he teaching? How are these things tied to our worth before Jesus?
5. In verse 38 Jesus calls us to take up our cross and follow him. What does he mean by this? His words suggest that we must make a proactive decision to take up and carry a cross; What does this look like in your life? What does it mean for you to take up his cross and follow him?