

RED  
Letters

**SERMON ON THE PLAIN**



# LUKE 6: 27-36

## SOME CONTEXT

1. Many claimants to the title messiah at the time. Most of them were rebels and insurrectionists like Barabbas and thieves on the cross. Fighting the Roman empire.
2. Jerusalem and Israel were under colonial rule so religion, social structures, economy were in disrepair.
  - Two high priests elected by Roman governors, An Idumean or Edomite king and harsh economic conditions e.g. high taxes
3. Jesus' Sermon on Mount/Plain presents an ideology and practical model for the kind of Messiah He is and what his followers will/should be like.

# RED Letters

**WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW IT**



This passage represents the crux of becoming like Christ or being a child of your Father.

- To you who are listening (put this into practice)
- It is a practical guide to fully expressing the power of God.

# RED Letters

**WHY DO WE NEED TO KNOW IT**



# PERSPECTIVE AT 3 DIFFERENT LEVELS

Jesus' words can be viewed from different lenses in order that we appreciate the power of His words. This morning we will focus on 3

1. **KINGDOM**: an overarching narrative of the impact God's kingdom has over the world
2. **COMMUNITY** - the value of a peculiar people and their influence on/in society
3. **INDIVIDUAL** - the basic unit of salvation and the power of human decision and action

**THE GOSPEL IS A SPIRITUAL  
REALITY REVEALED IN  
ORDINARY AND PRACTICAL  
HUMAN ACTION.**



# LOVE YOUR ENEMIES (SOCIAL INTERACTION)

- Love (AGAPE) as a decision and action based on convictions and values.
- Because this is what our Father has done. God so loved the world...
- It is a reflection of the rule and reign of God. His acts of mercy (Judgements, meekness and grace.
- Invoke blessings (The sun shines on both).
  - Implies using your voice to bless them.



# GIVING YOUR COAT (ECONOMIC AND LEGAL RECOURSE)

- It is a financial, economic and legal perspective of the kingdom of God.
- A community that effectively seeks to address financial injustice and usury.
- Individuals not bound or enslaved by material possessions.

# TURNING YOUR CHEEK (HUMAN DIGNITY AND HONOUR)

## THEOLOGICAL SCENARIOS

The idea of equality between people despite class differences

The indignity of being slapped on your right cheek with the right hand was a sign of being considered a lower person or lower class. To offer the left cheek would mean that your assailant would have to slap your left cheek with his right hand to deem you an equal or slap you with his left hand and deem his actions unclean.

# TURNING YOUR CHEEK (HUMAN DIGNITY AND HONOUR)

The idea that two wrongs don't make a right i.e. seeking vengeance

- Seeking revenge for wrongs that have been committed against you is contrary to the ideals and values of the gospel

How to react when you have been humiliated in public with humility

- From a Jewish viewpoint whoever caused someone harm had to pay for the cost of what they had done. In this case the cost for this would be double or four times

# HELP THE BROTHER IN NEED

- When someone comes to you with genuine need and you have the capacity to help them but choose to turn them away
- Some years back a friend of mine once asked me if I had a serious financial need would I look to my church family. I told them no because of my experience in the church at the time. Now that was my experience and not necessarily the truth of the Gospel.
  - My experience reflects a situation where the church looks like it is a different community but denies the true power of the gospel.
  - It represents decisions made by individuals including me that don't truly reflect the power of the Gospel.

# NO LOSS IN CHRIST

- Tests your anchor. Is it material or God? (Heb 6:13)
- Whatever we give we should not treat as lost.  
**Where is your treasure and security?**
  - Despite the fact that if I lend someone 10k and it doesn't come back the loss is obvious.
- In Jesus all action is profit with an eternal Return on Investment (eROI).
  - No scarcity mentality God's will on earth and in heaven.

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**WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?**



# We will be like our Father in heaven

1. Our actions are a reflection of the Kingdom and King we represent.
2. A community of bridge builders and priests willing to serve the world with reconciliatory and peace building actions.
3. These actions reveal the inner workings of the gospel in individuals who are full of the Holy Spirit and think with the mind of Christ.

**3**

**THINGS**

**WHAT SHOULD WE DO?**





# 1. ASK SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. Is there a difference between believers and sinners?
2. If the answer is YES, is it revealed in how we act?
3. If the answer is NO, are we really preaching and living out the Gospel based on the words of Jesus?

## 2. MAKE DECISIONS EVERYDAY

Christianity is both a rational and faith based belief system.

- The GOLDEN RULE: DO UNTO OTHERS...

The decision to act a certain way must be from faith in Christ and clear logical reasons why it is the best course of action.

- Romans 12 speaks of an intelligible act of worship in view of God's mercy.

### 3. ACTIVELY BE LIKE OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

The Lord's prayer speaks of His will being done on earth as it is in heaven. This is not theoretical but active engagement. God's will in heaven is not only absolute but it is revealed in action.

1. based on statistics Zim is either 70% or 11% Christian i.e. 10.5m or 1.6m believers respectively.
2. Could Zim be changed by the power of the gospel, the will of God revealed on earth through the actions of believers?

# RED Letters

**WHY SHOULD WE DO?**



- It is how the kingdom will come on earth. Our prayers for Christ to come and solve problems in Zimbabwe are answered when we live out the gospel in the world. (**Avoid delusion reprieve:** that by some chance things will get better)
- The world is transformed by actions that point people to Christ both spiritually and materially.
- It is good for us (I have benefited little from seeking the destruction of another person in fact it has pointed to the mess in my heart).

# BECAUSE IT WORKS FOR GOD

1. Love your enemies - JESUS LOVES HIS ENEMIES
2. Do good to those who hate you - JESUS DID GOOD TO US
3. Bless those who curse you- WHEN WE CURSED HIM HE BLESSED US
4. Pray for those who persecute you - HE PRAYED FOR US WHEN WE NAILED HIM TO THE CROSS
5. Do not retaliate or fight back - HE DID FIGHT BACK
6. Give freely and cheerfully - WE OWED HIM AND HE WROTE OFF THE DEBT
7. Treat others the way you would want to be treated - HE LOVED US

# YOU WILL BE...

- There is no mention of what will happen to your enemy or the people you help. Maybe they will change or maybe they won't. This message is about YOU/US
- Jesus says (declares) “YOU WILL BE” i.e. transformed into, receive and experience the likeness of God.

# A TOUGH QUESTION

- What would we take US\$1m or the opportunity to become like Christ?
  - My first instinct would be to take the US\$1m (based on many ideas)
  - One main idea: I can see how US\$1m can CHANGE MY LIFE!
- This likely means, I can't see how Christ will change my life.



- Yet, to be like Christ has the potential for both (in this life and the next) I can get Jesus and US\$1m when I am like Him. Matt 19:25
- Yet, US\$1m won't get me to become like Christ. It has no capacity to transform me into his likeness Matt 10:39.
- YOU MAY BE ASKING HOW
  - God gives ideas and innovations that can solve some of the world's most pressing problems. Psalm 2:8
    - Lets just assess the skills and knowledge in this room

**DABAR YHWH** (or Word of the Lord) as the very essence of all material manifestations and interactions but also all life and all mind, and is therefore equally living and mental. REF JOHN 1

- The "LOVE OF CHRIST" keeps the (Community) together and it is what the (Community) JOINTLY puts out. It derives from ALL INDIVIDUALS COMBINED and YIELDS IDENTITY TO EVERY INDIVIDUAL.
- It's not a mushy feeling, or poetic expression. It is RESPONSIBILITY with SUBSTANTIAL AND MEASUREABLE RESULTS of knowledge-based interaction, resulting in technology in its broadest sense.

# THE GOSPEL IS A FOUR COURSE MEAL

Maybe we are not enjoying or embracing the fullness of Christ

- Like going to a fully paid for 4 course meal and just eating the starter.
- Then complaining afterward that we didn't get enough food.

It is the same thing when we take portions of the gospel and leave out others.

# HOW SHOULD WE REMEMBER

- A debt free certificate signed by the blood of the Lamb.
- It certifies that you are like your father in Heaven.
- Go into the world and be like Him.

## 8 acts of unconditional love

1. Love your enemies.
2. Do good to those who hate you.
3. Bless those who curse you.
4. Pray for those who persecute you.
5. Do not retaliate or fight back
6. Give freely and cheerfully.
7. Treat others the way you would want to be treated.
8. Judge not