

Loving Like Jesus

Jesus said, *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”* These words are simple enough for a child to understand, but deep enough to shape a whole lifetime. Jesus does not merely say, “Try to be loving.” He says, “Look at how I have loved you. Now let My love become the way you love others.”

The best way to learn love is not through a definition, but through a person. We learn Christian love by watching Jesus. He is mercy walking down dusty roads. He is grace sitting at a table with sinners. He is compassionate, touching the sick, welcoming the rejected, and forgiving from the cross.

Today we will talk about two things. First, loving like Jesus means that I must accept others the way Jesus accepts me. Second, I must value others the way Jesus values me. If the Holy Spirit writes these truths in your hearts, I will change people and space wherever you are.

1. Loving like Jesus means I must accept others the way Jesus accepts me.



One of the deepest wounds in human life is rejection. Some of us still carry words spoken years ago: “You are not enough.” “You do not belong.” “You disappointed me.” Sometimes rejection comes from family, sometimes from friends, sometimes from church, and sometimes from our own inner voice. So, we learn to hide. We hide our weakness, our questions, our shame, and our need. We wonder, “If people really knew me, would they still love me?” Fear of rejection.

However, God knew us before the world began. God gave Himself for us; Jesus Christ. Before we could make ourselves clean, Jesus covered us with His righteousness. In Christ, God says to us, ‘You are My beloved. I have given My Son for you. You belong to Me. You are mine.’

Christ does not accept us because we are perfect. He accepts us because He is gracious. **His acceptance is not permission to stay broken; it is an invitation to be healed. He receives us as we are, but He loves us too much to leave us as we are.**

Think of the woman brought before Jesus in shame early in the morning. The crowd held stones to throw at her. The religious leaders wanted to trap Jesus. Jesus saw a person. He did not excuse sin, but He protected her dignity. He said, *“Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone.”* One by one, the stones dropped. When nobody was there, Jesus said, *“Neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin.”* That is holy love: grace without condemnation and truth said toward future life.

Jesus doesn’t meet us with stones. This love restores us. He knows what we hide and still comes close. He comes to us with nail-scarred hands. **He does not say, “Make yourself worthy, then come.” He says, “Come to Me, and I will make you new.”**

This grace changes us. The Holy Spirit in us lets us create enough room for people who are still growing. We listen with our hearts. We refuse to reduce someone to one mistake, one opinion, one weakness, or one painful season. Acceptance does not mean we have no boundaries or no truth. It means we offer people the mercy that we received. You can accept someone without approving of what they do. Without approving of their lifestyle, without approving of the way they’re living.

So, we can say in our church, “You do not have to pretend here. Bring your questions, wounds, and doubts. We will walk toward Jesus together.” This spirit will create a warm, restful, welcoming atmosphere. Do we have this here? In the community, you may meet a person in front of you who is someone you should love. Or say, the person is a gift of God for me for this moment to learn something.

So, now ask yourself: **Who is hard for me to accept?** Offer that person patience, respect, and prayer. Hold out the grace given from Jesus. And the love of Jesus goes even deeper than acceptance: He does not merely make room for us; He cherishes us as beloved children of God.

2. Loving like Jesus means I must value others the way Jesus values me.

Jesus not only accepts us; He values us. It is possible to tolerate someone without treasuring them. But Jesus never treats people as background. He sees the one in the crowd. He hears the cry others ignore. He notices the person everyone else has learned to pass by.

In Luke 12, Jesus says that not one sparrow is forgotten by God, and then He says, “*Do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.*” If God sees the small bird, **God sees you. God’s eye sees your entire being in love. God sees the prayer you cannot put into words. God sees the tear you wiped away before anyone noticed. He sees the burden you carry quietly.** You are not invisible. You are seen by God. You are more precious than the entire universe.

Artists create their art pieces. They are precious because the art pieces have the spirit of the artists. You? A well-known creator can increase the value of a common thing. You are the workmanship of God. God says that **“you are my poem, you are my masterpiece.” (Ephesians 2:10)** You were created with intention, with dignity, and with purpose. Never doubt your being as poetry!

And even more! Do you want to know what you are worth to God? God gave His Son for you. The cross, the sacrifice of His Son for you. You might still wonder what it means to be a beloved of God because you don’t feel it. Hold the word in your heart: “You are my beloved.” Meditate on it. The Holy Spirit will let you call God, Daddy!

God said, “*I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.*” God tattooed your name in His palm. We write things down when we do not want to forget. And when we look at the risen Christ, we see love written in scars.

If you have this truth, the Spirit will let you see others with respect and love. It is our duty. 1 **Peter 2:17 says, “Show proper respect to everyone.”** Everyone means the person who agrees with us and the person who does not. The person who is easy to love and the person who tests our patience. The person who is strong and the person who is weak. Every person carries the image of God and was paid the cost of the cross.

How do we show value? **Often in simple ways. We look up. We respect. We remember names. We let someone finish a sentence. We thank people specifically. We notice the person others overlook. Small acts of honor** can become windows through which someone sees the love of Christ.

Imagine someone walking into church after a hard week. They may smile, but inside they are wondering, “Does anyone see me? Does my life matter?” To this person, a warm greeting, a sincere question, a prayer, or an invitation to sit together can become more than kindness. It can become a small doorway into the welcoming heart of Jesus. Do you feel this in our worship space?

In a world where many people feel used, judged, ignored, or alone, the people of Jesus, we, are called to accept and value like Jesus saying with our small kind and loving words and acceptance and respect: “You matter to God. You are welcome to come to Christ. There is grace for you here.”

So, this week, affirm the value of one person. Send a note. Make a call. Speak a blessing. Tell someone specifically, “I thank God for you.” **Love becomes visible when value is spoken out loud.**

Beloved, Jesus loved us first. He accepted us when we were broken, and He valued us enough to give His life. Now He says, “Love one another as I have loved you.” This love is not weak. It is strong enough to forgive. It is humble enough to serve. It is brave enough to welcome ALL. It lays down stones, opens arms, and makes room at the table.

And if you are here today wondering whether God could accept you? Hear the good news again: Jesus came for you. Do any of you feel rejected? Come to the One who will welcome you saying, “I was waiting for this moment!” Feel worthless? Come to God who says, “You are more important than my Son. I gave my Son for you!” Do you feel far from God like the son who is hungry far away from home? Come home. Loving Father is waiting for you, searching for you to come back on the horizon.

And I want to ask you all. Do you have first love for Jesus? Find it again! In the Holy Spirit, let it be passionate, like fire that nothing can quench. Our God is a passionate God. Passionate people come closer to God. They love people and respect people in God’s fiery heart that gave us all of Heaven’s treasure.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for receiving us with grace and valuing us through the cross. Heal the wounds of rejection in us. Open our eyes to see every person as someone You love. Make our church a place of welcome, dignity, and hope. And if anyone is far from You today, draw them home by Your mercy. Teach us to love as You have loved us. Amen.