

## “Love Battles”

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Series: KINGDOM VISION 20/20

**Conversation Starter:** *“I just don’t love you anymore.” All through our lives we engage in relationships. From a child toward a parent, friendships, romantic and marriage along with employment and religion- our world is one in which humanity is networked in and through relationships. Relationships are engaged in by shared interests / values and changed or broken by a change in interests / values. But what about our relationship with Jesus? How central is our love for Him a factor in our commitment to Him? If He is who He says He is, why do so many not believe- and some who have walked away from Him?*

**Let’s Dig In!** *“Many will be led astray”*

Turn to **Matthew 24:3-14**. Jesus is again preparing His Disciples for His departure from this place they (together) lived and ministered in. This must be daunting for them, Jesus spending so much time preparing them for His absence. Yet he must and does.

They in turn press in and ask some juicy end time questions- Maybe you know people like that? They get so caught up about figuring out end time details that their presence in the local church and present ministry of Jesus is practically non-existent?

Jesus keeps their focus on Him. *“Protect our relationship. Protect what you and I have together, at all cost.”*

**Why?**

Some will try to lead you astray. Religious Deception (v.5). Upper class Bullying (v.6) Governments plotting (v.7) = Not the end but the painful transition of one kingdom leaving and another arriving (v.8).

**Wait- there’s more!** Nations / Governments will hate and persecute you because of me (Vv.9-10), false spiritual gifting will lead many away (v11), followers of Jesus will lose love for one another (v.12).

<<Time Out>> Check Out **Jeremiah 29:1-14**. <<Time In>>

But, if your love for me endures you will be with me (v.13). This is the witness of the Gospel as the kingdom of this world goes through the birth pangs of a new kingdom coming that will outlive it (eternal).

## Context Time! *“The Pain of Walking Away”*

*Jesus* experienced this already -> **John 6:66**. Jesus was talking of a Spiritual reality that was not the vision his followers shared; therefore, many left Jesus.

*Paul* experienced this with Demas who was once a partner in his inner circle (**Colossians 4:14**) but deserted due to loving this present world more (**2 Timothy 4:10-11**).

What do we do with this? What do we do about those who walk away?

I like what Jesus does in **John 6:67**. He asks you if you will leave Him as well.

It's still about you and Jesus. *“But Lord, they did this or that...”*. Nope. It is still about **YOU** and Jesus.

## Application Time (You knew this was coming)

Turn to **John 14:15-31**. Here is another conversation Jesus is having with His disciples, preparing them for his departure. This time he talks about the Holy Spirit and what the Kingdom coming will look like after his resurrection.

If we love Jesus, we keep his commandments. This foundation brings God's Spirit into us; and the reason the Spirit does not abide in this world outside of Jesus.

But Jesus, what about the rest of the world?! Look how Jesus responds in verses 23-24.

Quick detour -> **Galatians 5**

Our relationship to the Father depends on how we love Jesus. Our relationship with the Spirit depends on how we love Jesus.

***So, if our relationship with God and His Kingdom springs from our love for Jesus, then should not the rest of our lives in this world also be the fruit of our love for Jesus?***

How do we *cultivate* our love for Jesus and see the fruit of that relationship in our:

- Personal (One on One with Jesus) **March 8<sup>th</sup>**
- Marriages **March 15<sup>th</sup>**
- Families: Parent / Child (Biological / Foster / Adoption) **March 22<sup>nd</sup>**
- Jobs / Finances **March 29<sup>th</sup>**
- Church **April 5<sup>th</sup>** Yes, I know this is Palm Sunday. Trust me 😊

**“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.”**

**-Hebrews 12:1**