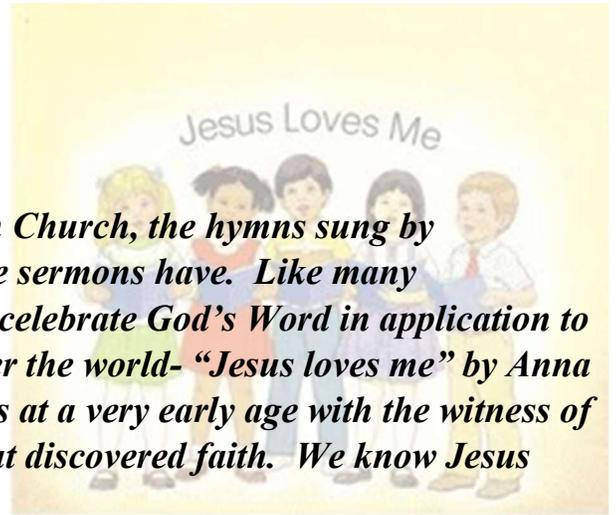


“I Love Jesus”

-> Pastor Damian Mericka / 08 MAR 2020

Series: KINGDOM VISION 20/20

Conversation Starter: *For many who have grown up in Church, the hymns sung by congregations tend to stick with us even more than the sermons have. Like many contemporary Christian songs, Hymns were meant to celebrate God's Word in application to our lives. One such hymn is taught to children all over the world- “Jesus loves me” by Anna B. Warner in 1862. Many came to place faith in Jesus at a very early age with the witness of these words. And many have grown up away from that discovered faith. We know Jesus loves us but what does loving Jesus look like?*



Let's Dig In! “*We've lost sight of Jesus*”

Turn to Matthew 8:14-27. We find Jesus at Peter's house where his mother-in-law is ill. Jesus touches her hand, heals her and she immediately rose up to serve Him. Many then were brought to Jesus for casting out demons and healing those ill. Brought to Him by who? His Disciples <- Jesus had not empowered and sent them out yet.

Early in the journey with Jesus was incredible excitement- Jesus can do anything! Like new love, they could not only not get enough, they could not but tell and lead others to Him!

Then, to leave the crowds, directs His disciples to follow Him. Others want to come, and Jesus detours them with a reality check. His Kingdom is not of this world; to follow Jesus requires full focus and attention (Vv.18-22).

His Disciples then follow Jesus into the boat and set sail for health, wealth and prosperity! **No, just kidding.** They sailed right into a storm that felt like it would be their doom. Quite the contrast, right?

Anyway, fearing for their lives they wake Jesus (yes- you read that right). Note the following sequence. Jesus challenges the application of their faith to circumstances then calms the storm.

Family Scrapbook time: King David (Psalm 3 / Psalm 23)

Lesson: Look at our circumstances in this world through our faith in God; not our faith in God through our circumstances in this world. *Otherwise, we can lose sight of Jesus and feel lost.*

Time to Go Deeper! “*Keeping our Eyes on Jesus*”

Turn to Colossians 3:1-17. While in prison, Paul writes a letter to the believers in Colossae after hearing that in order to keep people's eyes on Jesus many created rules that ended up causing believers to feel trapped and defeated.

Paul begins by reminding them of what Jesus reminded His Disciples of- look at your circumstances through faith in Jesus. Specifically, from God's Right Hand. Our eyes are fixed here, our hearts are beating here and our bodies will one day be here! (Vv.1-4)

Remember -> ***Spiritually Ephesians 2:4-10*** / ***Physical*** is yet to come ***2 Corinthians 4:7-18***

Theology Talk -> Sanctification: *Set apart from sin by God declared Holy / being made Holy.*

Check out ***Philippians 2:12-16.***

The Struggle is Real (Col 3:5-11). God has judged sin; His judgment upon sin is coming. Do you believe this? We are to put to death that old way of life; it's past experiences and present influences. We are no longer under sin; we should not be bearing the fruit of sin in our lives.

Trying to follow Jesus and sin results in ***hypocrisy*** (***1 Peter 2:16*** / Luke 11:45-12:3) and eventually ***apostasy*** (***1 Timothy 4:1-5***)

Rather (Vv.6-17) we should be nurturing the growth of Kingdom fruit in partnership with Jesus' Spirit within us. How do we do this?

Application Time (You knew this was coming)

Love. The answer is cultivating our love for Jesus. Last week we saw Jesus say, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

Paul says the same here in Colossians too.

- 1) God's Word must dwell in us richly and overflow in how we live and love among each other (3:16-17). God's Word (Bible) must continually be read, studied and meditated on.
- 2) Prayer. ***Luke 22:31-34.*** <- Really think about that for a minute! (See John 14:26).
- 3) Practice. ***1 John 3:1-10.*** *How we live affirms or denies Jesus more than our words.*

Let us embrace God's love toward us in Christ Jesus, surrender to the sanctifying work of Jesus through His Spirit and keep our eyes on Him being transformed and made Holy with every step closer...***every YES! to 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 8th***
- Marriages ***March 15th***
- Families: Parent / Child (Biological / Foster / Adoption) ***March 22nd***
- Jobs / Finances ***March 29th***
- Church ***April 5th*** Yes, I know this is Palm Sunday. Trust me 😊