

Becoming like Jesus authenticity (Based on Chapter 9 of *Costly Grace*)

The Big Idea

Our commitment to Jesus is reflected by the condition of our hearts.

Scriptural Foundation

... If you call your brother "You good-for-nothing!" you will be brought before the Council, and if you call your brother a worthless fool you will be in danger of going to the fire of hell. ... If you are about to offer your gift to God at the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, go at once and make peace with your brother, and then come back and offer your gift to God. Matthew 5:21-26 (TEV)

As C. S. Lewis explains, we are all eternal beings. The question that remains is where each person will spend eternity: in the kingdom of heaven or in hell. When we judge our brother or sister to be worthless, we stop seeing him/her as someone created in the image of God by God.

How does this change the way you think about the person who annoys you most? How does this change the way you think about the person who has hurt you most? How does this change your understanding of why you need the grace of Jesus to live like Jesus calls us to love?

Divided hearts, divided worship

And this is why Jesus cannot allow us to worship with divided hearts, where we claim to love God while we are in conflict with another believer. Jesus is as interested in your enemy's salvation as he is in yours and he wants you interested in your enemy's salvation as well.

What if we agreed not to have worship services until everyone in the congregation set things right with each other? How quickly would conflicts be resolved?

Kingdom Thinking:

- God can see my heart and he knows what I am thinking.
- Jesus, the way I am acting is not in line with your character. Show me the part of my heart that is still independent from you.
- My unwillingness to reconcile with my brother is really my insistence on remaining independent from Jesus.

Your Choice?

Will you give Jesus your whole heart or will you keep part of it for yourself?