

life group study guide

Things I Wish Jesus Never Said

February 26, 2017

When I first read that title- Things I Wish Jesus Never Said- I paused, thinking there were only about a hundred things I could add to that list. Then as I thought it over, I went a bit further- I added some the things Paul said in Romans and Corinthians. Then James, in his work. And John... You get the picture.

Then I stopped thinking about the words themselves, and began to think about how those words have impacted my life, both good and not so good. And how I have applied my life to them, how I've lived, what I've learned- where I've succeeded, where I've failed. There have been plenty of both-

And while I realize success and failures don't make me unique when it comes to living out the Christian life, they should make me unique in the world.

As of this writing, I'm not sure how the sermon will be introduced, but the notes for the lesson plan started like this:

SERIES TITLE *Things I Wish Jesus Never Said*
CONTENT: *Looking at the hard teachings of Jesus*

Q)- Reading this- (hearing this) – be honest and not rest on the message we've already heard today - what are some of the “hard” teachings that come to *your* mind right away? And the obvious follow-up- Q)- What makes them hard for you?

Q)- Here is a simple, not so simple question- Why would Jesus have such “hard” teachings?

According to the lesson plan given, there are three teachings covered today, let's take a quick look at them:

Forgive and you will be forgiven

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you

We will have to give an account for every careless word spoken

Just looking at these, the second one, our “Golden Rule,” seems rather easy. I want treated with respect, so I'll treat others that way. But the first, that one is a bit harder... And the third, *give an account...* That one can be downright scary when you stop to consider it.

As Christians, none of this should be new to us, as we are striving to live Christ like, we know we are to forgive, and treat others properly, and we know, if we don't fully grasp, that there will be a complete accounting...

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Q)- How do you think these three teachings affect non-Christians?

Q)- How do they affect you?

Q)- What is your least favorite here? Why?

Looking at my life, I know I struggle with all three of these at times. And I occasionally shudder at the accounting process, however, thankfully, I also know I am forgiven. But being forgiven doesn't give me a 'blank-check' to ignore these teachings. What being forgiven does give me, is strength. Supernatural strength from our God, to live life His way. Strength to live out these teachings.

I don't have to be perfect, but I do have to try to live towards that direction, and in our human weakness, God, in his mercy has given us Christ- and through Christ we have the strength, the knowledge, the tools, support to live out these- and all the other- hard teachings.

The message went on today to talk about producing fruit- remaining in the vine.

Let's read that section- **John 15:1-8**.

Q)- If our purpose is to produce fruit, how do these teachings fit into that?

Q)- What about this hard teaching- Verse 6- Where does that fit into our lives?

Trying to look back to when I first became a Christian, I just don't remember thinking about hard teachings. I suppose that I was so excited about where I was, what I had done in choosing Christ, that I simply wanted to tell the world and try to live a good life. I sometimes wonder though, as I have gotten older, hopefully wiser, and deeper into my walk with God, have I – do I- take some of this for granted. Has my walk become just a “part” of my life like going to work is a part of my life. Or is it still something I cherish, something I want to rejoice in daily. Sometimes it just seems through all that goes on around me, I just move on without taking a daily measure of my life for God. That is not a comment on if I am saved or not, I am. It's a comment on how I- we? - live our daily lives- just moving along without deep thought over some of the 'harder' but so needed aspects of Jesus's teachings. In trying to put these hard teachings into perspective, my thoughts are- “It's not that they are hard, it's that the world has so much pull, and I am 'simply trying to live my life here...’”

And, I suspect, if I'm honest, I don't often want to give an account of how I've lived.

But there is another verse- another hard teaching from Jesus- one that may fit some of us more than we want to admit- take a look at it- **Luke 9:62--**

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