

RADICAL LOVE

Cultivating Character – Part 5

August 10, 2014

DEFINITION: *Character is what you do when no one is looking... Character is who you are.*

Radical love was taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and in the way He lived.

Three Requests Of Radical Love...

1. Move beyond REVENGE.

Matthew 5:38-39 (NIV) *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’³⁹ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.”*

Can you imagine how hard it must have been for the disciples to hear Jesus' challenge to turn the other cheek?

2. Move beyond LEGAL RIGHTS.

Matthew 5:40 (NIV) *“And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well.”*

Love never seeks to get away with doing the bare minimum.

3. Move beyond what is EXPECTED .

Matthew 5:41 (NIV) *“If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.”*

How Are We To Understand These Radical Requests?

Matthew 22:35-40 (NIV) *“An expert in the law, tested Him (Jesus) with this question. ³⁶ ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ ³⁷ Jesus replied, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment.*

³⁹And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.’ ”

Jesus said that our second-highest priority should be to love people in a radical, non-retaliatory, second-mile way.

Jesus' way of loving was radically new.

Jesus Wants His Followers To Be Radical, Non-Retaliatory, Second-Mile Lovers Because...

1. Radical love breaks the cycle of

INTERPERSONAL HOSTILITY.

Genesis 4:8b (NIV) *“Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.”*

The cycle of hostility must be stopped if there is ever going to be relational harmony in this world.

2. Radical love is EVANGELISM.

If you really want to make a deep, lasting mark on someone, demonstrate radical love.

Matthew 27:54 (NIV) *“When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, ‘Surely He was the Son of God.’ ”*

3. Radical love is a GATEWAY into Christ’s presence.

John 15:13-14 (NIV) *“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴ You are My friends if you do what I command.”*

Radical love doesn’t make sense. It’s not easy... but the world desperately needs it now more than ever!