

"You Want Me To Love Him?"

The Beatitudes



Do we ever want to change God's mind about our being nice to people that are "unlovely." In today's world, we wonder why we should be nice to people who are killing each other whether it is on the "battlefields" or on the streets of our towns and cities. We never kill! Or do we? Do we kill the spirit to be kind by shunning people in our everyday life if they are not like us? Do we ever walk around with our head down so we don't have to speak to certain people? Do we "forget" to compliment people, when we know it would make them happy to be recognized?

In Acts we are told about a man named Cornelius who lived in Caesarea. He was considered by all to be a good man and he worshipped along with the

members of his household. He always seemed to be there to help those in need. One day, an angel called to him "Cornelius." He answered "What do you want, sir?"

The angel said, "Your prayers and neighborly acts have brought you to God's attention. Here's what you are to do. Send men to Joppa to get Simon, the one everyone calls Peter."

As soon as the angel was gone, Cornelius called two servants to do as he had been told. We need to remember that Cornelius was a Gentile. Peter was a Jew. The two did not see eye to eye in theology and government. Actually many Jews felt that Christ came for them, not those Gentiles.

While the two men were on their way to Joppa, Peter also had a vision. He saw the skies open up and a sheet was lowered in front of him that had all kinds of animals and reptiles on it. The voice told Peter "kill and eat." Peter questioned because many of the animals on the sheet were not approved by Jewish laws concerning food. Then the voice told him again that if God said it was o.k., he should not question. This happened three times.

When the two men that Cornelius had sent arrived at their destination, they asked for Peter. They told the people at the door they had been sent by Cornelius and that he had been visited by an angel. They were to meet Peter and take him to Cornelius. Peter went with them. Peter's visit told him that God was at work and steps needed to be taken. Peter, as a disciple was chosen by



Christ to spread the Good News. Cornelius introduced Peter to everyone who had come. Peter told them that it was not popular for Jews and Gentiles to mix, but that he also had been given a vision telling him that all people were equal in God's eyes.

Cornelius told Peter "So I did it—I sent for you. And you've been good enough to come. And now we're all here in God's presence, ready to listen to whatever the Master put in your heart to tell us." The Bible tells us that Peter stayed several days, and many believed, both Jews and Gentiles.

Peter realized that the vision of the animals was to let him know that God is no respecter of persons. God's message is for all. God had made him realize that every nation that fears God is accepted. We are to make peace with all people and all nations. Only through the truth from God will this happen. We are the vessels appointed by God to carry His truth. Are we able and prepared to be His peacemakers?

We often sing a very popular song "Let There Be Peace On Earth" that is written in prayer form. We are reminded to be a peacemaker. Some of the lyrics are:

“Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.

With God as our Father, Brothers all are we.

Let me walk with my brother in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me. Let this be the moment now.

With every step I take, let this be my solemn vow.

To take each moment, and live each moment in peace eternally,

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.”

Maybe we can't conquer the world with love through government, but we can, through the love of Jesus Christ, make an impression. We can let people know that we have peace in our hearts. By showing them our love, they will be able to listen to our message about Christ's love for them. Our actions will speak much louder than words.

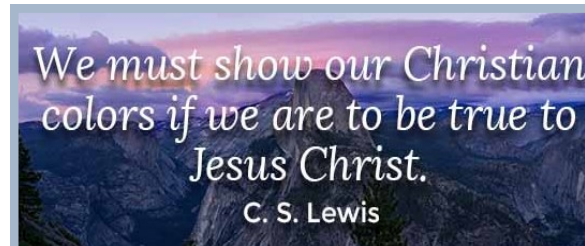
Stories in the Bible are easy to read and we can always say it doesn't apply to us. It is just a story in the Bible. Is it? I believe those stories in the Bible are there because

“You truest friends are the ones who will stand by you in your darkest moments because they're willing to brave the shadows with you. And in your greatest moments because they're not afraid to let you shine.”

Nicole Yatsonsky



we are like those people. We are those people. Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh because he didn't like those people. Sometimes we don't like certain people and so we try to find excuses not to stand up for them. If we are a true friend, we will stand up for each other. It isn't always going to be easy. Can you dare to stand up for your friend when you know it is unpopular? We will be there in the good times, and also in the bad times if we really are truly one of Christ's friends.



*“If I can stop one Heart from breaking
I shall not live in vain
If I can ease one Life the Aching,
or cool one Pain,
Or help one fainting
Robin into his Nest
again,
I shall not live in Vain.”*

Emily Dickinson



When God Pushes You
To The Edge Of
Difficulty
Trust Him Fully
Because Two Things
Can Happen
Either He'll Catch
You When You Fall,
Or
He Will Teach You
How To Fly

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for the lesson You gave to us through Peter. We are often confused as to what we should do. Help us to compliment people and not be judgmental. Help us to help the unlovely and those who don't know our Lord and Savior. Amen.

1. Who are our friends?
2. Can we take Christ at his word and then seek to bring that “Word” to life?
3. How can we love the unlovely?
4. How can we stand up for a friend?
5. How can we show we care for a friend?
6. Can we dare to believe what Christ said and then act accordingly?
7. Can we be a Peter or a Cornelius? Should we?

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The healthiest relationships are those where you're a team; where you protect each other and stand up for one another.

Sharon Rivkin

Therefore I tell you,
whatever you ask for in
prayer,
believe
that you have received it,
and it will be yours.
Mark 11:24