



LEGENDS OF THE CALL

Small Group Questions Week 4

1. There are two primary words used in the New Testament that are translated as “love” in our English versions. The first is the type of love humans have for each other, “Phileo”. This is conditional love: I love you because you love me. The other is “agape” which is unconditional love: I love you because I choose to love you, it has nothing to do with how you treat me. Which type do you think God has for us? How do you know this? Which type do you think God commands us to have for others?
2. Read Matthew 5:43-47. Is there someone in your life that you find difficult to love? Why is it difficult? What did Jesus say in this passage we should do for them? Why? If we only love those who love us in return, what kind of love are we demonstrating? How can we begin to love a person who is hard for us to love?
Answer – Jesus said that if we only love those who love us, we are no different from those who are not Christians, there is nothing significant in loving that way, it is just “phileo” love. The way you begin to love a person who is hard to love is by: 1. Make the decision that no matter how they treat you, you will treat them in a loving way, 2. Ask God to change your attitude toward them and help you to be loving toward them, and 3. Do not focus on their behavior but focus on pleasing God in everything you do.
3. Read John 13:34,35. How is this different from the Old Testament command you read in Matthew 5:43? In this passage, Jesus said that this type of love is what would cause people to know that we are His disciples, why would this type of love be so noticeable to other people?
Answer—The Old Testament command was to love others as you love yourself, Jesus said to love others as He has loved us. The first type is conditional and the second type is unconditional. Unconditional love is so noticeable to others because humans typically do not love other people that way. Unconditional love is attractive to people because usually no one loves them in that manner. It should be the distinctive characteristic of Christians.
4. In the book of Ruth, what did Ruth do that showed her love for her mother-in-law Naomi? Why was this such a significant decision for her to make? How did God bless Ruth for her love of Naomi?
Answer—She showed her love for Naomi by leaving her homeland and her own family to move to a place where she was a stranger with people who were completely different from her. God blessed Ruth by providing for her through Boaz and her child (Obed) was king David’s grandfather and an ancestor of the Messiah, Jesus.
5. How should the story of Ruth change our perspective of loving and caring for others? Challenge: Choose one person in your life that that has been difficult to love and begin to actively treat them in a loving way. What is one thing you could do for them that would show unconditional love?