

Christlike Love Corrects When Needed

Defining Real, Christlike Love: Part 3

Matthew 16:21-28

When people think of Christlike love, most often they think of characteristics like kindness, forgiveness, and compassion. While these things are undoubtedly part of showing Christlike love, this type of love goes much deeper than that. Christlike love, as we have discussed, is desiring what is best for the other person. While we'd like to think this always means remaining positive, true Christlike love means being willing to have tough conversations and correct those God has given us this influence with. Here in this story, we'll see Jesus be incredibly loving to one of his disciples, Peter, during a moment of weakness.

1. Read verses 21-22 detailing Peter's reaction to the information Jesus shared. What flaws and poor characteristics was Peter showcasing through his reaction/response?
2. Read the strong language used by Jesus in verse 23. Was Jesus being unloving in his response to Peter? If not, how was Jesus being loving to Peter through the words and actions that he chose to use in this verse?

3. Read the blunt instruction of Jesus to his disciples in verses 24-26. How was Jesus demonstrating Christlike love to the rest of his disciples through these teachings?
4. If Jesus would have let Peter's response pass in an effort to preserve his feelings, would that have been the loving thing to do based on our definition of Christlike love? When we avoid difficult conversations or corrections, are we loving the other person in a Christlike way? If this isn't the loving thing to do, why do we often avoid these conversations?