



[Teacher Note: To begin, I tried to get across the idea of someone helping us through everyday life. You can make your own.] I know you can tell from my external physique, but I work out and I'm [smirk] REALLY strong. I used to go to the gym with a former student of mine who is a personal trainer now and I mean this dude like JACKED. He's 6 foot 6, 220 pounds and he is a big boy of muscle. I used to go to this private gym where he worked and he trained me.

When you lift weights, one of the things you have to do in order to get stronger is you have to lift things that are heavier than you can handle. You have to fail with a weight in order to get stronger. And as you go through your workout, the trainer's role is to spot you. Then, when you are about to fail, they step in to help you lift up the weight so you don't die, basically.

It just got me thinking, how cool would it be to have a spotter in regular life. Maybe it's not a big body builder, but just someone to step in and help when you are about to fail. Then, when you don't have the ability to do it, they come in and help you. Think how cool this would be:

- You are about to take a test you didn't study for... they step in and take it for you.
- You are texting and walking and about to hit a pole because your head is down, and they just guide you so you don't even skip a step.
- For me, when I am being impatient with my kids, the spotter would just flick my ear as a reminder that I am the adult and they are the kid. Be an adult.
- When I walk by that thing on the ground for the 5th time that I know my wife would love for me to pick it up and put it away, the spotter would just sit there pointing to it.

It would just be awesome if we had someone who helped us through life.

Well, we do. Jesus said He's left us the Holy Spirit as a helper, a spotter in our Christian walk, to challenge, convict, and help us be better followers of Jesus. And this spotter is powerful.

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same power that lives within you through the Holy Spirit, and He helps us when we need it. For instance, when Jesus calls us to love God and love others, we cannot love the way He calls us on our own, we need a spotter, we need the Holy Spirit.

Look.

*Matthew 22:37-40 NLT*

*37 Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

Hold up...

Do I love God with

- All my heart? No.
- All my soul? Like the Pixar movie? No.
- With all my mind? Um, if you only know what I thought about sometimes. No.

AND...

Do I love my neighbor as myself? I love myself. I sacrifice a lot of things for me so I can enjoy the things that I love according to what our culture tells us. I sacrifice my health for eating Oreos because I love them. I sacrifice my character because I tend to lie about looking better than I actually am because I want people to like me. I sacrifice my image because I refuse to let people know the REAL me in a small group.

My question is why do we even need to worry about this?

My question to you is: what happens when we don't?

Decay. Hurt. Pain.

I don't know if you have noticed at all when you look at our culture, but there is a lot of brokenness when it comes to loving people. Because the word is so watered down, love is something that means nothing and because of that, the world is a broken, hurtful place.

And it's so hard because if we can't even love the ones who should be EASY to love, how will we love those who are hard to love?

[Here, I told a personal story about my own family. Replace it with something that happened in your own life that matches the teaching and intent. Personal is always best.]

Personally, I have seen what happens when we don't love in the way that Jesus calls us to love and I have seen in my own family how devastating it can be and if I can help you understand how big of a deal this is, you would go about this whole idea in a different way:

- My parents divorced 4 years ago,
- My mom was an alcoholic,
- I had to lead an intervention on her,
- She went into rehab, and she relapsed,
- When she relapsed, my dad checked out and he filed for divorce,
- When he did that, my mom was obviously upset and went a little psycho because hurt people tend to hurt people,
- My brother didn't like that my dad made that decision, so he cut him out of his life,
- My mom and my brother did not like the fact that after things calmed down, I still hung out with my mom AND my dad separately, so they cut me out.

So, we are called to love? This?

And it hits me... this is what Jesus talked about. When we refuse to love God with everything and refuse to love others as ourselves, decay happens.

I literally watched my family crumble in front of my eyes, blinded by their hurts and my wife and I, who were trying to do the right thing, getting kicked and stomped on because of it.... THIS is what Jesus calls us to do in how we love.

**ALL PEOPLE ARE HARD TO LOVE.**

Jesus says love God and love others. It's impossible to do it. What does that mean? And before we even get into it, I will just say... loving others the way God calls us to love is impossible to do... by yourself.

We will need the power of the Holy Spirit, the strength of God, a miracle really, OUR SPOTTER... in order to really live this out but yet it's something that is always worth it.

**We must look *TO* God to love others *LIKE* God.**

Let's read this list and go through, what I would call a litmus test of how well we are doing in loving those who are easy, medium and hard to love in our lives and why we need God in our lives in order to actually do this.

*"Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality."*

**Romans 12:9-13 NLT**

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