

Zach Moffatt  
Kingston Springs UMC  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  
July 10<sup>th</sup> 2011

## Truly In Love?

Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, AMEN.

This past April, the two other senior leaders in our FCA club at the high school, Emily and Tyler, came to me and asked me how I felt if they started a Saturday night bible study. I was super excited about the idea and told them to go for it! When I asked them what book of the bible we would start with they told me that we weren't going to actually read the bible. Emily told me that she read a book a couple months back and it really changed her spiritual life and said that was the book we were going to study. The book is titled Crazy Love and was written by world renowned author and pastor, Francis Chan. In the book Francis talks about the crazy love the God has for each and every one of us. It talks about how we do not deserve the love that He has for us but He gives it to us anyway. However, Chan also challenges his readers to become more radical Christians; to show the love and the grace that God has for us to the other people who are around us. Francis begs his readers to step out of their comfort zones and become on fire for God. He begs us to give all honor and glory to our Lord.

How many of you remember your first true love? Do you remember the butterflies you felt in your stomach when you around them? Do you remember your heart racing when your hands accidentally brushed against each other? Do you remember the excitement of the first hug, the first kiss? There is nothing like the feeling of love. No other human emotion is like it. Love is that feeling that can push you through the worst of days; it is that emotion that can make you do some crazy stuff. Love is the medicine that

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heals the hurt, the broken, and the needy. Love is a powerful feeling and it can make even the worst of times become bearable.

This is the way Jesus wants us to feel about him. He wants us to have these feelings when we talk about him. Jesus wants us to be in love with him. Matthew says that Jesus went out of the house to go and sit by the lake. Then a large crowd gathered around him and Jesus started to teach. He told them the parable of the sower. He said that a farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed around some seed fell upon the walking path and birds came and ate the seed. Some seed fell upon the rocks where it took root quickly but when the sun came they withered away because of the scorching heat. Some seed fell into thorn bushes where it took root but the thorns choked away the plants. However, some seed fell upon fertile ground, took root, and produced a crop, thirty or even sixty times more than what was originally sown.

After this Jesus then starts to explain the parable to the disciples. Jesus explains to them that the seed that was on the path represents those people who hear the message of the Kingdom but do not understand it. Trouble comes and what was sown in their hearts is gone. Those people who hear the word and receive it at once with joy but because they have no root they quickly forget and that joy goes away is the seed that fell upon the rocks. The seed that fell upon the thorns represent those people who hear the word but the worries of life and deceitfulness of wealth choke them, making them unable to bear fruit. However, the seed that fell upon the good soil is the person who hears the word and understands it.

My friends, what kind of seed are you? Are you the seed that fell upon the path, lost and not knowing what to do? Are you the seed that fell upon the rocks, and life's twists and turns are causing you trouble? Are you the seed that fell among the thorns and the worries of life, greed, or selfishness causing you to forget what life is all about? Or are you the seed that fell on the good soil, bearing fruit, having strong and stable faith. It is obvious what kind of seed Jesus wants us to be. He wants us to be the seed that fell on the fertile soil. All the other seeds were lacking one thing, they were lacking love. Now, they were not lacking the love that God has for them; instead, they were lacking their love for God. My friends, for us to be

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the people that Jesus wants us to be, we have to truly become in love with him. We have to be in love with Christ, not with the rewards that He promises us.

John Piper, once said in one of his books, “The critical question for our generation-and for every generations-is this: If you could have heaven, with no sickness, and with all the friends you ever had on earth, and all the food you ever liked, and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed, and all the natural beauties you ever saw, all the physical pleasures you ever tasted, and no human conflict or any natural disasters, could you be satisfied with heaven, if Christ was not there?”

My friends, this is a question that we all need to answer to ourselves honestly? If we could have heaven with all our friends, all our favorite foods and no turmoil, but the savior of the world is absent, would you still take it? That is a tough question, but, if you are truly in love with Christ then the answer should be no. Going back to the beginning when I was speaking about your first love, we should always have the affect when we speak to Jesus. When you are truly in love with someone you go out of your way to spend time with them, you make time for them. When you are truly in love with someone you don't mind staying up late talking to them. When you are truly in love with someone you don't push them away when you've had a rough day, a rough week, or a rough year. When you are truly in love with Christ, you truly bring meaning to the scripture, “Live by faith, not by sight.” You go and do what He has called you to do, without asking questions, because you know that Jesus will look out for you, you know he has your best interest in mind, you know because of your love for him that he will never forsaken you.

The Psalmist had it correct in Psalm 42 when he said, “As a deer pants for water, so my soul pants for you oh Lord. My soul thirsts for the living God, when can I go and see my God?” We should long to want to spend time with our God. We need to want to dive into his word on a daily basis. We need to want to talk to him, to give him all our burdens. We need to want to become truly in love with Jesus because when we truly love him and do His deeds out of love instead out of mere obligations, isn't that what truly brings him Glory? God wants us to want to do his bidding, not feel like we

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have to. He wants our love for Him to be so strong, that nothing can break it. He wants our roots to be planted in love, in the good soil, so we can bear fruit and be kingdom raisers instead of heaven gazers.

In the book, Crazy Love, Francis Chan tells a story of a 14 year old girl, who was truly in love with Christ. “Brooke Bronkowski was a beautiful 14 year old girl who was in love with Jesus. When she was in junior high, she started a Bible study on her campus. She spent her babysitting money on Bibles so she could give them out to her unsaved friends. Youth pastors who heard about this brought her boxes of Bibles to give away.

“During her freshman year in high school, Brooke was in a car accident while driving to the movies. Her life on earth ended when she was just 14, but her impact didn’t. Nearly 1500 people attended Brooke’s memorial service. People from her public high school read poems she had written about her love for God. Everyone spoke of her example and her joy.”

“I (Francis Chan) shared the gospel and invited those who wanted to know Jesus come up and give their lives to Him. There must have been at least 200 students on their knees at the front of the church praying for salvation. Ushers gave a Bible to each of them. They were the Bibles that Brooke had kept in her garage, hoping to give out to all of her unsaved friends. In one day, Brooke led more people to the Lord than most ever will.”

What a powerful story that shows what it is like to be truly in love with Christ. When we submit our whole life to him, when we give him all of our trust, our faith, and our love, then we can do powerful things in the name of the Creator. Now, it doesn’t mean that you’re not truly in love with God if you don’t do exactly what Brooke did. It doesn’t mean that you’re not truly in love with Christ if you don’t sell all of your possessions and move to Africa to start a mission. It doesn’t mean you’re not a radical Christian if you don’t downsize your house so you can give more. All we have to do to show that we are truly in love with Christ, is to let Him lead us; let Him guide us; and let His Love for the world pour out through us. That is what it means to be truly in Love with Christ.

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So, my friends, what kind of seed are you? Are the seed that is lacking in love or are you the seed that is abundant in love? Jesus needs to be the center and focal point of our lives. He needs to be the reason we wake up in the morning, the reason why we lay our heads down at night. He needs to be the reason why we do mission work, the reason why we read our bible, the reason why we worship. We need to have a FIREY PASSION for the Christ, for the Savior of the World. Let's be the seed that fell on the good soil; let's truly fall in love with The Redeemer.

For Christmas this year one of my presents was a license that says, "Real men love Jesus." This may sound silly but it is a statement that is 100 percent the truth. If we honestly do love Christ with all our hearts, with all our minds, with all our souls, and with all our strength then why do we sometimes struggle to show it? It doesn't make sense to me that people can go to sporting events on Saturdays and scream their heads off for someone they don't even know, but when Sundays come, they are as quiet as a mouse. Shouldn't it be the opposite? When Sundays roll around, or when the time comes to do the Lord's work, shouldn't we scream our heads off for the Lord of Lords, the King of Kings, the Prince of Peace? We shouldn't be ashamed to show our love for our Lord and Savior because when you're truly in love you want the world to know. My friends, let the world know, let the world know who you are in love with, let the world know you are in love with Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

I leave you with this my fellow sisters and brothers in Christ as a reminder of what true love is, "Love is patient, love is kind, love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things." -1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians Ch. 13: 4-7

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