

It's All About God

Session #9 – The Family

“Christ’s interests were strikingly different from those of the average man or woman. Christ was not interested in earthly treasures, pleasures, and glory. He was not interested in sensual gratification. He was not very seriously interested in human praise or loyalty. Certainly he was not selfish or self-centered. Christ was primarily interested in people – all people. Every person was important to Jesus of Nazareth.”

- E. H. Ijams, *Principles for Victorious Christian Living*, Vol. 4, 1968

Thinking It Over

Can you recall a time in your life in which you experienced failure? What kinds of emotions did that experience cause?

Read Matthew 5:23-41. Think about the specific instances Jesus mentions. Have you ever been in a comparable experience? How did you react?

Exploring the Text

This passage reminds us of two things Jesus had done – **1. He raises the bar.** As Jesus reminds us in Matthew 5:43-48, anyone can seek revenge. How are Christians expected to act? In what ways does Christianity raise the bar for our behavior?

2. Jesus moves from legalism to relationships. The point is not to measure out exactly two miles when you “go the extra mile,” but to do more. Why is legalism so tempting?

Bringing It Home

Read through the goals of the Central Church of Christ on page 99. These were printed by E.H. Ijams and A.M. Burton in 1925. Judging from this list, what was important to that congregation? What was the focus of that congregation’s efforts?