

# THE HARD SAYINGS OF JESUS

Part 4 of Foundations 260. Luke 16-20; Various.  
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. February 2, 2025.

## DID YOU NOTICE?

**Did you notice how many times Jesus made challenging statements?**

- The hard sayings of Jesus are hard because 1) they can be difficult to understand, and 2) they can be difficult to accept.
- They challenge us to commit to Jesus, go against our culture, and step out of our comfort zones.
- Today, we'll look briefly at the meaning of six hard sayings before concluding with the single big idea behind them all.

## THE HARD SAYINGS OF JESUS

**Hard Saying #1: Don't Twist Scripture, Luke 16:18.**

Luke 16:18 (CSB) "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and everyone who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery." The Father welcomes us as children who need his love, care, and protection.

- The Bible has unchanging authority in our ever-changing culture and circumstances.

**Hard Saying #2: Forgive, Forgive, Forgive, Luke 17:4.**

Luke 17:4 (CSB) "And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and comes back to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him."

- We must not place limits on forgiveness.

### **Hard Saying #3: Miracles Don't Change Hearts, Luke 16:31.**

Luke 16:31 (CSB) "But he told him, 'If they don't listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.'"

- Reading or hearing the Bible is God's appointed means of convincing skeptics to believe. Nothing else can take its place.

### **Hard Saying #4: No Second Chances, Luke 17:31.**

Luke 17:31 (CSB) "On that day (when Jesus returns), a man on the housetop, whose belongings are in the house, must not come down to get them. Likewise the man who is in the field must not turn back."

- When Jesus returns, it will be without warning, and there will be no time to repent and believe.

### **Hard Saying #5: It's Not Easy, Luke 18:8.**

Luke 18:8 (CSB) "Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

- It's not easy to follow Jesus. Hard times will come, so we should pray for strength to stand firm in adversity.

### **Hard Saying #6: Don't Lie To Yourself, Luke 18:22.**

Luke 18:22 (CSB) "When Jesus heard this, he told him, 'You still lack one thing: Sell all you have and distribute it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.'"

- Our hearts may fool us into thinking we're right with God, even while we're trusting in false gods, such as money, friends, or good works.

# WHAT THE HARD SAYINGS TEACH US

## The big idea behind the hard sayings of Jesus is this:

- To enter the kingdom of God, we must change our beliefs and behaviors.
- The ways of this world are incompatible with the kingdom of God.

## Three thoughts explain this:

- Jesus sets the standards for the kingdom, not us. We don't get to edit them.
- The ways and culture of the kingdom are counter-cultural. The hard sayings should rock our world and force us to decide between Jesus and the world.
- Jesus rejected easy believism and cheap grace. He did not ask for mere mental assent. He calls us to follow him and apply his kingdom teachings.

- The term "cheap grace" was coined by German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his book *The Cost of Discipleship*. He defined it as:

"Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate."

## A Helpful Resource

- For more insights into the hard saying of Jesus, check out *Hard Sayings of Jesus* by F. F. Bruce (available on Amazon for 48% off).

# SMALL GROUP GUIDE

## REVIEW

- Review Peter's February 2<sup>nd</sup> teaching and study guide.
- What were the highlights of Peter's teaching?
- What questions do you have about the passage or Peter's teaching?
- Use the S.P.E.C.K. method to reflect on and apply the teaching:
  - S: Sins to confess
  - P: Promises to claim
  - E: Examples to follow
  - C: Commands to obey or Christ to rest in
  - K: Knowledge or insights to consider

## DISCUSS

- How did you react to the six hard saying of Jesus? Did they feel countercultural, challenging, easy, normal, annoying, what?
- Which hard saying is hardest for you to apply? Explain.
- What encouragement or advice would you give to someone struggling to follow Jesus' countercultural teachings?
- How have you managed to avoid easy believism or cheap grace without going to the opposite extremes of self-righteousness or works righteousness?

## PRAYERS

- Ask the Lord to grant more grace to follow his will and ways.
- Pray Colossians 1:9-13 over the group.