

THE JESUS WAY!

Scripture used: [Matthew 5:14 \(ERV\)](#), [Matthew 22:37-39 \(NIV\)](#), [Matthew 5:44 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

This week's message answered an urgent question for our time: how should followers of Jesus live when the world keeps pressuring us into "us versus them" thinking? Pastor Hurmon reminded us what makes NBCC distinct. In a polarized and polarizing world, we are called to be something different: a Jesus-first church. That means we are not defined primarily by political tribes, preferences, or culture war categories. We are defined by the Lordship of Jesus and by His command to love. At NBCC, our "secret sauce" is agape love—love that is unconditional, redemptive, and extravagant. Agape is the kind of love Jesus modeled and commanded us to practice, especially with the people we are tempted to call our enemies.

KEY POINTS

1. **A Jesus-first church is rooted in the Lordship of Jesus and the command to love.** To be a Jesus-first church means that Jesus is not merely an influence on our lives—He is Lord. We surrender to His authority, and we take seriously His command to love God and love our neighbor above every tribe, preference, and personal agenda. This kind of church stays rooted in scripture and refuses to let the world define its identity.
2. **The Jesus Way is the practice of agape love across differences.** Agape love builds people up rather than tearing them down. It does not require agreement, compromise, convictions, or abandoning truth and justice. Loving your neighbor does not mean approving of everything they do or believe. It means willing good to them before God. Jesus even commands us to love our enemies in [Matthew 5:44\(NIV\)](#). That kind of love is what truly sets followers of Jesus apart from the world.
3. **3. Agape love is strong, not soft.** The Jesus Way does not call us to ignore boundaries, remain unsafe, or stay silent in the face of injustice. Scripture still calls us to speak up for what is right, as seen in [Proverbs 31:8 \(NIV\)](#). Agape love is not weakness. It is the courageous decision to live with kindness, empathy, integrity, forgiveness, and generosity while remaining anchored in truth.
4. **The Jesus Way must be practiced intentionally.** NBCC's "secret sauce" is not just believing in agape love, but practicing it. The message offered seven interpersonal spiritual practices that help us live this out: engaging at the level of story, the power of kindness, radical empathy, shattering labels and labeling, courageous integrity, redemptive forgiveness, and life-changing generosity.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Have you ever been misunderstood? What did that feel like? What helps you stay connected to people who think differently than you?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** -Jesus calls us to love our enemies in Matthew 5:44—what do you think that actually requires of us in real life? What does it mean for Jesus to be Lord over not just our beliefs, but our reactions, emotions, and relationships?
- 3) **DO** - Take your next step of engagement in [The Jesus Way](#): sign up to facilitate a group, join a group, or host your own group. This week, pause during difficult interactions

and ask yourself, “Am I thinking about this the Jesus Way?” Then take one practical step of agape love.