

The Price of Loving Like Jesus

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- Theme: Understanding the cost and complexity of Christ-like love
- Phoenix shared deeply personal story about caring for her dying mother
- Emphasized that loving like Jesus requires stretching beyond comfort zones

Mother-Daughter Relationship & Reconciliation

- Phoenix's mother died Easter Sunday 2024 at age 65
 - Lost leg to diabetes complications
 - History of cigarette smoking and poor diet management
- Complex relationship marked by intergenerational trauma
 - Great-great grandmother was enslaved
 - Grandmother believed mothers "had to be moms and nothing else"
 - Mother loved through provision, not affection or celebration
- Years of estrangement due to mother's unkindness
 - Phoenix maintained boundaries: "if you can't be kind, you don't get to talk to me"
- Reconciliation began when mother became seriously ill
 - Phoenix took over medical care despite continued rejection
 - Fought hospital/nursing home systems to get proper care
 - Mother eventually gave detailed apology during lucid moments

The Cost of Christ-Like Love

- Requires showing up even when rejected or hurt
- Means loving people who taught you "how to survive them"
- Involves separating what happened to you from who you choose to be
- Key insight: "Love did not erase my boundaries"
 - Can love someone and not stay
 - Can forgive and not return
 - Can honor relationship without reopening harmful dynamics

Group Discussion Themes

- Forgiveness primarily benefits the forgiver
 - Quote: "To forgive is to set the prisoner free, only to discover the prisoner was yourself"
- Parents did their best with available resources and knowledge
 - Importance of extending grace to past generations

- Need for self-forgiveness for our own parenting mistakes
- Love sometimes requires distance and boundaries
- Tension between intention and perception in relationships

Key Takeaways & Reflection Questions

- Jesus-like love stretches us beyond ego and comfort
- Question for reflection: “Who am I called to be when love crosses me?”
- Love doesn’t have to be easy to be transformative
- Importance of community support when practicing difficult love
- Remember: loving like Christ requires divine help, not just willpower