

THE BIG IDEA: The antidote for bad blood is the love of a good God.

The Take-Off

This is it - the last week The Gospel According to Taylor Swift.

Man, what a series! We've asked one question all along: what would happen if we took the message of culture and used to to speak a better message to culture?

It's the teaching method of Jesu, remember? He used parables, which was just taking common things and using them to point to an uncommon truth.

With a net worth of 250 million, I'd say Taylor Swift is something a lot of people have in common.

Love her or hate her, we've more than likely heard of her, and so we've used 3 of her more popular songs and shown the truth in them and also where they fall short of the greater gospel according to Jesus.

Week One was "Shake it Off" and we talked about offenses and how Jesus enables us to shake off the attack and still love the attacker.

Last week we looked at "Love Story" and learned that being in love isn't possible until we've been loved by Jesus. Today, we wrap it all up with "Bad Blood."

I don't know how many of you have ever actually observed the effects of a transfusion or infusion, but I have.

It all started on Christmas Ever of 2001 when Wendy and I gave her mom the gift of urine.

When she didn't understand what the pregnancy test meant, we knew something wasn't right, because she's a nurse. But a trip to urgent care and some bags of fluids and she was transformed back to her normal smart self!

The power of good getting rid of the bad, and it's exactly what we need from God.

See, we've all got bad blood, and if we don't get an antidote for it, we're gonna be in a world of hurt.

Sadly, the effects of that bad blood are seen most often in our relationships.

In fact, that's why Taylor Swift is selling so many albums: she'll never run out of material, because we'll always be around people, and relationships are, well, really hard.

It's not just hard to be IN relationships, but her song reveals how hard it can be to END relationships, too.

Not that we're giving you life coaching tips on how to break up with someone, but texting the break up is a bad idea, and these are the worst of the worst.

[Text breakups]

Obviously, the gospel according to Taylor Swift has a simple answer for the problem of problem relationships: "now we've got problems and I don't think we can solve them."

But the gospel according to Jesus picks up where Taylor's gospel leaves us and offers us something better, and it all starts with what we learned last week: the love of Jesus is unlike any love on the planet and does something radical in those who receive it.

This morning, let's see what happens when we're loved by that kind of love; how does it impact the "bad blood" relationships all around us?

We'll be in 2 Corinthians 5, and I just want to show you 3 very specific things that the love of Christ does to us.

1. Christ's love COMPELS us

- a. I can't say this enough, but everything we talk about today hinges on the relationship we have with Jesus
- b. Paul knew that, and he knew that fearing the Lord (in there words, having a healthy view of God) is the beginning of clarity. (v. 11) Proverbs 9:10 says the fear of the Lord is where wisdom can begin.
- c. What happens when we really see God for who he is? We see ourselves for who we are.
- d. Sinners in need of a rescue.
- e. This love of Christ compels us to do 2 things:
 - die to sin
 - real love deals with real issues, in this case, our sin
 - Jesus' love didn't allow him sweep our sin under a rug; it allowed him to pay for it on a cross
 - the people who are most on fire for the Lord are the ones most aware of what he did for them
 - Luke 7:47
 - live for him
 - who are you living for?
 - when we're so full of the love of Jesus, we're compelled to live our lives for his glory, not our own
- f. It's a lot like what happens after eating Mexican food - dying to sin and living for him is the natural result of being loved by him

2. Christ's love CHANGES us

- a. Obviously his love changes us in regards to what we just talked about, but it changes what we see, too
- b. It changes our worldview
- c. Look what Paul writes
 - it changes how we see Jesus
 - he's not just human, a good teacher, a great man
 - he's the sacrifice of God in order to pay for our sin and repair our brokenness
 - it changes how we see the cross
 - it is more than a religious symbol
 - it is a reminder of a payment paid for us that we could never have afforded to pay
 - we wrote checks we couldn't cash and Jesus paid the bill at the cross
 - it has power to change (v. 17)
 - it changes how we see others
 - souls who need reconciliation eternally more than just friendships socially
 - there is more than just this life
- d. Bottom line? What Jesus has done for us should change what we think he can do for others.

3. Christ's love CALLS us

- a. This is when the difference between the gospel according to Taylor Swift and the gospel according to Jesus can really be seen
- b. It's one thing to allow Christ's love to deal with MY sin, to live for Jesus as MY savior, to change the way I see MY world.
- c. It's another to allow that love to send me back out into a culture to represent him, but that's exactly what Christ's love does.
- d. He calls us:
 - to speak for God
 - we are his ambassadors
 - we stand for him and speak on his behalf
 - to speak to men
 - men, women, girls, boys, ethnicities, economic levels - "we implore YOU"
 - an urgent appeal "BEG"
 - to speak about hope
 - men everywhere can be reconciled
 - we don't have to live unresolved lives with God
 - the message is clear: now is the time of favor and salvation (6:2)
- e. When we're arrested by the love of God, we can't help but speak FOR God TO men ABOUT hope!

The Landing

As we land this plane and let Taylor Swift get back to her career, let's talk about the Big Idea and a Huge Takeaway...

First, today's Big Idea is simply that **the antidote for bad blood is the love of a good God.**

Why? Because just like my mother-in-law was disoriented on that Christmas Eve, the sin we fight keeps us off balance and unable to love in the way we've just talked about.

That's why the Huge Takeaway from the Taylor Swift series has to be that the best culture can do is what comes naturally to us, and that will never equal what Jesus wants to do supernaturally in us.

We shake offenses off and build fences to keep the mean people out, but Jesus took on our sin and drew near to us.

We crave the love of a man or a woman, but Jesus loves to satisfy that craving with the love of a Savior.

We carry around bad blood and it taints every relationship we have, but Jesus offered his blood so his grace could paint every relationship we have.

The gospel according to Taylor Swift is common.

The gospel according to Jesus is uncommon.

I want the uncommon, and that's what will get the attention of culture that is looking anywhere for a better message than the one it's hearing now.