

GPS: Grow—Pray—Study - Sunday, May 25, 2014

“FORGIVENESS: SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN”

“If your enemies are starving, feed them some bread; if they are thirsty, give them water to drink.” Proverbs 24:17

No force is more destructive to our lives and our happiness than anger or resentment, yet grudges can be hard to let go of. There are few things we want to keep as much as we want to keep our enemies. We have a natural inclination to want to hang on to our resentments, to keep an enemies list, to lash out at those who have hurt us, to seek revenge on our own terms. It seems natural—because it is natural! It is part of our condition in a sinful world. Anger and resentment are terrible instinctive drives that have the power to consume all aspects of our lives, to distort our sense of purpose, and destroy our relationship with God.

Our sermon today continues Pastor Wayne’s final series on forgiveness. Forgiveness is the divine answer to the problem of natural resentment. The example of Christ should serve us as a model in how we go about forgiving.

The Scripture verses for our sermon come from the Gospel of Matthew:

Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy times seven.” Matthew 18:21-22

So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24

Sermon Notes

REFLECTIONS FOR THE COMING WEEK

MONDAY “If your enemies are starving, feed them some bread; if they are thirsty, give them water to drink.” - *Proverbs 24:17*

- The Bible never asks us to tolerate our enemies. It asks us to do something more, something harder.

TUESDAY “Then Peter came and said to him, ‘Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy times seven.’”

- *Matthew 18:21-22*

- Examine yourself today and ask if there is something you do that another has had to forgive as many times as this.

WEDNESDAY “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” - *1 John 1:9*

- We are promised that if we confess our sins, we can be healed and forgiven. Do you believe this promise? How have you acted on it?

THURSDAY “The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him.” - *Daniel 9:9*

- Do something unexpected for someone you love today. If that person you love is an enemy, all the better.

FRIDAY “So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.” - *Matthew 5:23-24*

- Before you write out a check for the church or plan some good work this weekend, remember the people in your life. Should you offer something to them?

SATURDAY “Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.”

- *Micah 7:18-19*

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK: Lord, I know that forgiving and being forgiven are two names for the same thing. The important thing is that a discord has been resolved. Forgive my sins, that I may dwell with you. Heal my hurt, when I forgive those who dwell near me.