

Part 6 the Action of Forgiveness Nov 27

Intro: Stefan Duerksen – Lead Pastor of Southland Church

Hi to those online!

Announcements or Celebrations:

- **Christmas Offering! Kicks off this weekend!**
- **Camp, Church Renewal and Tupendane and today a short highlight of our Community Impact**

Church-wide Requests: PRAY TOGETHER. Church Renewal: Directors for India & the Chinese worldwide, make many global disciple makers (The Way)

1. Pray P. Ray & Fran – strength, favor, safety, fun, joy and much fruit as they continue to travel and present the vision of CR.
2. Pray for those using the Way discipleship materials to experience God. To know Him!
3. Pray for the Lord to raise up disciple makers who will make Him known to others!
4. Pray for the Church to be renewed... set free of sin, filled with the Spirit of God, filled with boldness and passion to share the Word of God and their testimonies with others!
5. Pray for the Church of Canada and in our region, SE MB, to make Jesus their “TRUE NORTH”. That loving him and loving others would become our #1 Priority in life.

Story Amish Grace: 2006 West Nickel Mines School shooting at Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania, and the spirit of forgiveness the Amish community demonstrated in its aftermath.

When a group of Amish schoolgirls are taken hostage and killed in their classroom, their parents and the Amish community of Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania, **stun the outside world by immediately forgiving the killer**. Ida Graber, mother of one of the murdered children, has a tougher time than the others accepting the tragedy, but in her anguish and pain, she begins a personal journey of renewed faith, ultimately accepting the heart-wrenching tragedy of losing a child after learning that her murdered daughter, Mary Beth Graber, had promised to pray for the perpetrator before her death; reconnecting with her husband, family, and community; offering forgiveness to the killer; and even showing kindness and compassion to the killer's widow and children — all in the form of Amish grace.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amish_Grace

Recap: Two weeks ago we started talking about the Ministry of Reconciliation – and the path to Restoring Relationships once hurts are present.

- Forgiveness – releasing someone from the debt they owe us – me & God
- Reconciliation – repairing the break in relationship with another person – both parties & God
- Trust – Necessary for healthy, loving relationships to thrive. It is the expectation of safe and fair treatment by both parties. (we don't have to trust everyone) – both parties & God
- **Jesus is in the business of repairing relationships.** He made a way for our relationship to be repaired with Him! And He calls us to share this GOOD NEWS WITH OTHERS – the Ministry of Reconciliation!

Reconciliation – forgiveness – these are WONDERFUL IDEAS!!! But in practice? You ever notice how justified you feel in your anger towards someone else? We aren't in sin! NO! they are! **WE ARE THE VICTIMS.**

And there are many cases we genuinely are the victims! ABUSE VICTIMS – it is NOT their fault! NO! But we get angry and hold resentment for much more than ABUSE.

- They are gossiping about ME – I didn't DO ANYTHING – I have the RIGHT TO BE ANGRY
- My spouse IGNORES ME. They don't satisfy ANY of my needs! Who wouldn't be angry?
- My parents don't listen to me – they just want to control me! It is sooooo FRUSTRATING
- My friend STABBED ME IN THE BACK! ARG!!!
- They are SUPPOSED TO BE CHRISTIANS and LOOK HOW THEY ACT! AHHH!
- The GOVERNMENT TOOK AWAY MY FREEDOMS! NO MORE!
- NO ONE CAN TELL ME WHAT TO DO! I AM MY OWN PERSON!

WE ARE OUTRAGED at the INJUSTICE done to us and others! By those closest to us, by our boss, by social media! By the government! By the church!

- **It's as though OUTRAGE AND ANGER were a FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT!**

This is part of what keeps us TRAPPED in OFFENSE! As long as we feel JUSTIFIED in our holding onto OFFENSE & ANGER – we will stay offended!

REVIEW PART 5: Step 1: Forgiveness – Truly forgive from the heart

A. the Heart of Forgiveness

1. Our King & His Kingdom are MORE important than our RIGHTS. – regardless of what the culture says
2. Whatever measure I use with others will be used with me
3. My sin is just as bad as their sin
4. **NEW:** My love for Jesus is greater than any harm done to me by others

Why are we spending so much time on this? Because OFFENSE is the #1 KILLER of our LOVE for God and other people! and that is our HIGHEST CALLING. To LOVE GOD & LOVE PEOPLE.

Acts 8:12-24 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." And Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me."

- Interesting... Simon responded to the Good News – he 'believed' – but in a counterfeit way!
- Bitterness has him trapped in sin. Deceived. Peter's response was for him to repent of this that he may truly be saved!

B. The Action of Forgiveness

Mark 11:25 And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, that your Father may also forgive your trespasses.

SUMMARY: Steps to Forgiveness: (explained in pt3)

- i. ACCEPT what happened to you.
- ii. CHOOSE to forgive & confess offense
- iii. PRAY for the one who hurt you. PRAY for yourself. PRAY and tell God exactly how you feel – BE HONEST
- iv. PERSPECTIVE: Ask Jesus to speak truth into what happened.
 - a. What does he want you to know?
 - b. How does he see you?
 - c. How does he see the other person?
- v. **LOVE IS ACTION: do good to those who hurt you.** NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE OR APPROPRIATE.

I get many questions, “HOW DO I FORGIVE?” today we’ll focus on the most important part!

Matthew 5:44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

Love– as a **VERB** – an **ACTION** – is the pathway to forgiving from the heart!

Love as a noun – describing a **FEELING** we have – Or something we **SAY** “I still love them”

Objection #1: Stamp of approval: If I show them love, they won’t see what they have done

- **Romans 12:19-21** Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.
- **You see, we think that by holding a grudge. By withholding LOVE we are making a point.** We are saying, “what you did isn’t ok!” and although that may be true – withholding love through resentment and offense is **SIN** and **TRAPS US IN OUR PAIN**.
- **Two wrongs don’t make a right!** And sin on our part **NEVER** leads us to healing or freedom.

CAVEAT: ABUSE is DIFFERENT. You should get help to work through this. IF you are in an abusive relationship now, leave. Remove yourself to a place of safety. Get help. And then begin the work of healing. Contact a Pastor and/or Counsellor.

MARRIAGE EXAMPLE: for the 100th time, you are in the same place. He/she doesn’t see me! Doesn’t care! Won’t engage! Continues to do _____

You have a choice:

- **Brood and withhold love** to make a point. Avoid them. And wait for them to realize what they have done.
- **Brood and lash out!** You go the path of getting even. You will show them what it’s like!
- **FORGIVE THEM BY SHOWING LOVE** - And you go and **SERVE** them! **HELP** them! **ENCOURAGE** them! And you **PRAY FOR THEM!**

CAVEAT: Step 1 Forgiveness is about removing the log from your own eye. Step 2 Reconciliation is where we deal with the wrongs committed against us (and those we’ve committed against others)

Jesus modeled “loving his enemies”:

1. Laid down His life. Gave up His rights.
2. Prayed for our forgiveness. “Father forgive, for they know not what they do.”
3. Offers forgiveness & reconciliation as a gift

CAVEAT: Jesus had no SIN. With us? Both parties are sinful and broken. SO the process looks a little different. BUT the principles REMAIN THE SAME.

Objection #2: Need to heal 1st: IF I open myself up to LOVE, it will leave my vulnerable & open to further pain

- There is truth in this. And I am not advocating for no boundaries or not speaking up for yourself.
- Have the walls you erect in your heart ever healed your pain? Or, set you free?
- **Loving others – especially those who hurt us - is the pathway to healing & freedom!**
 - RECONCILIATION is different. BUT you can heal & find freedom BEFORE your relationships are restored!
 - And even if your relationship is NEVER restored.

1 John 4:11-21 18. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

- 20. If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.
- 11. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

Loving God & people is the pathway to being perfected in Gods love!

Matthew 22:37-40 And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

What would happen if we started here??? Someone hurts us... instead of get even... or withdraw until we heal... what if we looked for ways to LOVE THEM? **DEFAULT SETTING – BE WISE OF COURSE!**

To LOVE those who hurt us. To LOVE those we disagreed with.

COMMITMENT: “Yes, Lord, I will.... Love those who hurt me. I will pray for them. I will forgive them. I will give myself to radical acts of loving those who hurt me and disagree with me.”

Matthew 5:44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

CAVEAT: Abuse – yes. contact a Pastor or counsellor or therapist. You may need to REMOVE yourself from the situation before working through any steps – that is 100% ok! And you should do that.

The ACTION OF FORGIVENESS will require a DEATH in you. It will. It did for Jesus as well!

The promise for those who follow Jesus in this beautiful act of LOVE – they find TRUE LIFE! Healing! & FREEDOM!

C. **PRACTICE** the Action of Forgiveness

- Who is someone you disagree with? That frustrates you? Pick something smaller. Then work through the rest of the steps.

- **PRAY** – for your heart to heal, change & for the one who hurt you
- **LOVE THE PERSON WHO HURT YOU** – plan, be creative, bless, encourage, serve – LOVE
 - **What is your plan?** What will you DO?

- **JOURNAL** – the difference between RESPONDING IN LOVE vs RESPONDING WITH OFFENSE

Radical LOVE to those who hurt us is the pathway to being UNOFFENDABLE

Step 1: Forgive from the heart – once we have done this. NOW... we are ready for...

Step 2: Reconciliation – restoring broken relationship

MARANATHA!! Come soon Lord!

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SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2022

Cruise Ship → → → → → Battleship

1. **Great Command** (Mt 22:37-40): Love God – Love people: hospitality, generosity, serving & empathy
2. **Great Commission** (Mt 28:18-20): Disciple family, friends, neighbors & beyond
3. **Word & Truth** (1Pet 3:15): Know the Gospel, grow in discernment, speak the truth in love
4. **Persecuted Church** (2 Cor 4:7-10): Religious freedom, freedom of speech, spiritual fortitude, wisdom
5. **Church Renewal:** Directors for India & the Chinese worldwide, make many global disciple makers (The Way)
6. **DONE - Leadership:** Wisdom and direction in the search for Lead Pastor and Executive Pastor