

Part 7 the Process of Reconciliation Dec 4 22

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Hi to those online!

Announcements or Celebrations:

- **Christmas Offering – Church Renewal**
 - **Making Disciples who make Disciples!**
 - Teach them how to Know God, have a real relationship with him, hear his voice, find freedom in Christ, grow godly character, stand firm and confidently in the Truth of the Word and how to take that process and duplicate it with others!
- **Giving towards the Christmas offering in the Green Envelopes**
- **GIVING CHALLENGE:** Pay it forward: drive thru, or pick up a coffee and drop it off.
 - **Let's show Steinbach and region the love of Christ by being generous!**

Church-wide Requests: 1. & 2. Great Command & Commission: Love & Disciple family, friends, neighbors & beyond

- Take a moment and think of the people in your life that need the Good News!
- Pray for them by name, that they would know Jesus & discover His love for them!
- Pray and ask God for an opportunity to love them and model Jesus to them!
- That we would be so in LOVE with Jesus that sharing him would become our greatest joy!
- For Steinbach, region, workplaces, schools... pray for our MISSION FIELDS

Recap:

He is the father of lies... Soil: hurts & wounds → **seed:** lies → **fruit:** Offense, bitterness & resentment

Jesus was clear in his commands for us to forgive. He expected forgiveness to flow from his disciples, regardless of the hurt or wound they experienced!

That's not fair! Forgiveness the Compassion Command – why?

A. The devastating effects of offense, bitterness & resentment:

1. When we hold onto offense, the Lord does not forgive our offenses
2. It imprisons us in the pain from whatever happened and prevents us from healing
3. It can effect our physical health as well as our mental health
4. It is at the root of addiction and other harmful behaviours
5. It causes our LOVE to grow cold – changes the way we see ourselves, others, God and the world around us
 - a. “Persistent bitterness may result in global feelings of anger and hostility that, when strong enough, could affect a person’s physical health,” says psychologist Dr. Carsten Wrosch from Concordia University in Montreal, Canada.
This means that even though you started out angry at one person or event, the anger and resentment will grow strong enough through the years to be directed not only at an individual or event, but at any other people around you.

It doesn't even matter if they have done you wrong; **holding on to that anger for a long time has, in essence, changed how you see others**, and even a slight mishap can produce strong feelings of anger in you that are not warranted by the event that set it off.

6. It sets us up for further deception – MORE PAIN

Note to those working through Forgiveness: you may feel stuck... or that you are trying to forgive and it's not working...

- Forgiveness is a PROCESS that begins with a choice.
 - Forgiveness does not erase what happened, or eliminate all the effects of what happened
 - Forgiveness is the pathway to personal healing
 - Forgiveness is ONE STEP in RECONCILIATION –
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- **Tempt us to hurt others** or entice others to hurt us – **Offender**
 - **Tempt us to hold onto hurts** caused by others – **Offended & bitter**
 - Distort our understanding of forgiveness – trapping us in our pain! And robbing us of freedom and joy!

When it comes to RECONCILIATION - What about the OFFENDER? The wrongs done to us? Are they just cancelled without consequence?

Jesus' heart towards offenders - Read Luke 17:1-10 from your BIBLE

Luke 17:1-10 *And he said to his disciples, "Temptations to sin are sure to come, but woe to the one through whom they come!"*

1. Judgement is coming for unrepentant Offenders

It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin.

- These are sobering words! To the abusers, the violent, the ones who oppress and hurt others... Jesus has a stern warning!
- **Jesus is making a point! Judgement Day:** It would be better to die a tragic, painful and early death THAN TO live as one who abuses and hurts others on the day we stand before Jesus.
- **Offenders are those who tempt others to sin** – hurting others is one of the most insidious ways to tempt others into sin! We create the primary soil for the enemy to do his work!
- **How we treat people created in God's image MATTERS TO GOD.**
 - **In Malachi & Isaiah** – the Lord PREFERRED they shut the temple doors and stop worshipping Him – why?!?!?! Because they were neglecting the POOR and the WIDOWS.
 - **NEGLECT is OFFENSIVE to God.** Whether to the poor or to our FAMILIES.
 - **EXAMPLE: Neglect** – Not receiving the things needed for living – can lead to attachment disorders that effect the way you see God, the world, and others.
 - **In Ezekiel** – they killed their babies, committed sexual sins, murdered their brothers, and worshipped idols – that is the "short list" of offenses committed that caused the Lord to...

- **Sound familiar?** Abortion? MAiD? The sexual immorality that is rampant in our culture? Including the church.
 - **Warn** – multiple times – to repent
 - **Disciplines** – to get them to repent
 - **Judge** – when people refuse to stop their wickedness he judges
- **Ezekiel 18:23-24** Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live? But when a righteous person turns away from his righteousness and does injustice and does the same abominations that the wicked person does, shall he live?
- **Spectrum of Offenders:**
 - Breaking promises
 - Gossiping
 - Liars & thieves
 - Adulterers
 - Neglecting the needs of others
 - Narcissistic & controlling behavior
 - Abusers
 - Murderers

2. We are ALL Offenders!

- We are all offenders. We all sin. We all hurt others.
- **Our God is a God of JUSTICE** as well as MERCY. He LOVES people. and takes the TREATMENT OF ALL PEOPLE SERIOUSLY.

Pay attention to yourselves!

- Watch that you don't become an offender! You don't become someone who tempts others to sin by how you treat them!
- **Matthew 5:21-22** "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire.
 - When we hurt others – small → BIG – we become offenders... murderers, insulting others, slandering them, etc.
- **THE GOOD NEWS:** Jesus offers FORGIVENESS – you may suffer the consequences of your sin on this earth – JUSTICE. BUT, you can be forgiven the ETERNAL CONSEQUENCE OF SIN & spend an ETERNITY WITH JESUS!
 - Turn from wrongdoing and receive Jesus as your Lord & Savior
 - Admit the wrongs you have done to God and be forgiven!
 - Seek forgiveness from those you have hurt
 - Make amends where possible (story of Zaccheaus in Luke 19)

3. Seek forgiveness from those you offend & make amends where possible

Matthew 5:23-25 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison.

- **The early church took this literally....** If you had unresolved relational conflict, they sent you out of the church service to go and MAKE IT RIGHT – BEFORE – coming to worship and break bread together. WOW!
- **Example:** Stefan had to confess theft, lying, hurting others and more! confessing theft, lying, hurting other
- **Luke 19:** story of Zacchaeus the tax collector – 4x paid back! Half his wealth given to poor.
- **PRACTICE:** is there someone you need to seek forgiveness from? Write it done.
 - **CAVEAT:** reconciliation requires BOTH parties. Just because you are ready to apologize and make amends, does NOT mean the other person will be. If they are not ready to talk, or won't receive your apology, then you wait on them!
 - This is part of the CONSEQUENCE of being an OFFENDER
 - **Example:** when you are ready. I would like to apologize.

4. Reconciling with those who have hurt you

If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him." The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, ...

- **This is NOT forgive & Forget – NO!** on the contrary! Jesus said, "if your brother sinned against you, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him"
- **This doesn't mean you HAVE TO CONFRONT** – but it legitimizes confrontation as an important part of reconciliation.
- **Confrontation can be the RIGHT THING TO DO. Not in every circumstance. Wisdom required!**
 - **In cases of abuse or immoral behavior (adultery, pornography addiction, lying, angry outburst, etc.)** Confrontation and consequence are the right thing.
 - **If you are being abused:** Leave the situation and get help first. GET HELP IF UNSAFE.
 - **Galatians 6:1** Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.
- **Consequences are good for us!**
 - **For example:** it is LOVING to create boundaries that come with consequences for those who cross those boundaries.
 - **Of course this too can be abused!** See note on "watch yourselves that you don't become an offender!"
 - **Done right.** Boundaries and consequences are LOVING.
 - **In cases of ABUSE – LEAVING and getting help is the RIGHT & LOVING THING TO DO.** It's not loving to you, your family, or the abuser to stay and attempt to forgive and forget when people are being hurt!

- **Example:** addiction – Teen Challenge – treatment center – consequences for men/women stuck in pornography – Pure Desire! Having to pay back a financial debt to someone you took advantage of.
 - **LOVE does not mean there is no consequence! It means that consequences are done in LOVE**
 - **Hebrews 12:11** For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.
- **Matthew 18:7-35 If Your Brother Sins Against You**

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector...

 - Forgive the offense from the heart
 - Seek forgiveness for your part
 - Share your grievance with love – “when you did _____, I felt _____”
 - Give the person a chance to respond
 - Forgive & show grace: how can I show love?
 - **Remember:** Consequences, Boundaries & getting Help are BIBLICAL
 - **Caveat:** Abuse – seek outside help FIRST
 - **Caveat 2:** These are simple steps – relationships and hurts are complex. We can’t cover the nuances of each situation in one model. These steps are to outline the important elements for reconciliation to happen.

The Bible is CLEAR – we are to forgive – 100% of the time – no matter the offense. 7x70!

When we have hurt others? We are to drop everything and go and make it right.

When others mistreat us – we can confront them and we can enforce boundaries until we see change or there is a change of heart!

PRAYER Lord, give us a new heart! Help us let go! Heal us! Give us the courage to own our mistakes! Teach us to RECONCILE with those around us as you RECONCILE with us! Give us WISDOM in how to respond! Cover us in GRACE! and teach us to be UNOFFENDABLE! Light a FIRE in us that burns with LOVE for YOU and LOVE for PEOPLE created in Your image!

Worship & Pray!

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