

Aveleigh's Vacation Bible School Week 2017
YOUR YEAR OF WORSHIP
Sunday July 23,2017

Sermon: THE KINGDOM OF FORGIVENESS

TEXTs Mat. 5:43-48 p. 1040 & Mat. 18:21-22 p. 1056

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Matthew 5:43-48 (NIV)

FOUR KINDS OF LOVE:

Storge = parental love, family love

Eros = romantic love of a man with a woman,

Phileo = friendship, love between closest friends, brotherly love

Agape = unconquerable benevolence, generosity, and kindness;
invincible goodwill

1. AGAPE LOVE BEGINS AS AN ACT OF YOUR WILL

"Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." Luke 6:28 (NIV)

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 12:17-21 (NIV)

"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Matthew 5:48 (NIV)

Perfect = *teleios*: total, complete, mature

2. YOUR RELATIONSHIPS DEMONSTRATE YOUR MATURITY

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony 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, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector." Matthew 18:15-17 (NIV)

"Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?' "Jesus answered, 'I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.'" Matthew 18:21-22 (NIV)

"Love keeps no record of wrongs." 1 Corinthians 13:5 (NIV)

3. FORGIVENESS IS THE LIFESTYLE IN THE KINGDOM of FORGIVENESS.

“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt” The servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’

“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ In anger his master turned him over to the tormentors to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.” Matthew 18:23-35 (NIV)

Conclusion; Your 30 Day Challenge

1 : Give it to God.

“Apart from me, you can do nothing.” John 15:5 (NIV)

2 . Change your mind.

“Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Romans 12:2 (NIV)

3. . Pray for them

“Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you.” Luke 6:28 (NLT)

PRAYER: God help us to live in Your Kingdom of FORGIVENESS. Amen.

- FOUR FOR THE ROAD:**
1. Do you know anyone who has been wronged?
 2. How did they feel about being wronged?
 3. What was their reaction to being wronged?
 4. How might Christ help you react the next time you are wronged?

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CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: In the grace freely offered in Jesus Christ,

People: in the atoning work of Christ's death on the cross,

Leader: in the power of forgiveness to change lives.

People: in the redemption that turns sinners into saints,

Leader: in the wholeness that mercy brings,

People: in the freedom that liberates us from sin's hold,

Leader: in the new life that is ours, now and for eternity.

People: We proclaim The Kingdom of God's forgiveness.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Father, Your Word warns that "judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful." But if we forgive others when they sin against us, then You will forgive us as well. For in the same way we judge others, we will be judged, and with the measure we use, it will be measured to us. So, Father, right now I release into Your hands those who have done me wrong. I open the door of the debtors' prison I have held them in, and I set them free. And I ask, in Jesus' name, that You will set me free from the torment of bitterness and unforgiveness. O God, help me to walk in the lifestyle of the Kingdom of Forgiveness. AMEN.