

MONDAY 2.27.23 – Luke 6:27-31

²⁷ "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹ If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them. ³⁰ Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Today's passage focuses not on the offender, but the offended, and willingness to forgive. I offended a brother in Christ. I am not sure what I did, but I have repeatedly sought forgiveness.

Not only is my brother not willing to share the offense, but they are unwilling to forgive. Their unwillingness to forgive hurts them more than it hurts me. Each time they see me the bitterness is obvious. It is affecting their ability to worship, to experience the joy of Christ, and to share the love of Christ with others. It pains me to see this, but it is adversely affecting their walk with Christ more than it effects mine.

The Bible tells us over and over to be quick to forgive no matter what the offense, because unforgiveness will affect our relationship with Christ. If the Holy Spirit is living in you, you have the ability to forgive, but your willingness to forgive is up to you. For your own sake, please be willing.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

TUESDAY 2.28.23 – Romans 12:17-19

Judgement... disagreement... criticism... negativity... revenge... hate... All human reactions to situations we encounter throughout our daily lives. Let us lift up the following prayer together so that, as one unified body of Christ, we might hold each other accountable as we serve our neighbors. Gracious and loving God, today we pray we never pay back evil for evil to anyone. We pray we always think about and demonstrate what is right in the sight of the Lord. As it depends on us, we pray we are at peace with everyone with whom we come into contact. We pray for the strength and faith to never take revenge but leave room for God's wrath. Forgive us, Father, for the grudges we harbor and the evil things we think of others. Help us to see and to value others as Jesus does. In His name we pray. Amen.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

WEDNESDAY – 3.1.23 – Acts 25:13-26:32

While in prison in Caesarea, the Apostle Paul appeared before King Herod Agrippa II prior to being sent to Rome. Paul's speech before Agrippa is his sixth and final defense of Christianity recorded in the Book of Acts. However, Agrippa rejected the light of the gospel. He tried to discredit the message by accusing Paul of being insane, and he tried to minimize his own conviction by his nonchalant reply: "Do you think in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" Agrippa was almost persuaded. Charles Spurgeon said, "Almost persuaded to be a Christian is like the man who was almost pardoned, but he was hanged; like the man who was almost rescued, but he was burned in the house. A man that is almost saved is damned." A person must believe on the Lord Jesus in order to be saved and have eternal life.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

THURSDAY 3.2.23 – 1 Samuel 16:7

This verse is such a powerful directive to us and also a source of power for us. It is a directive because we do not have ability to look into someone else's heart. So much of what is accomplished in our world is governed by the motivation of the workers. We are involved daily in such endeavors and must consider why such actions occurred and how to deal with them. A critical spirit may well cause division or dissention over a miscall on motivation. So, questioning someone's heart motivation is dangerous to relations.

On the other hand, God does see into the heart. More importantly, He sees into ours. He dissects our purposes and intents better than we can. We must learn to seek and trust what He shows us about our own heart in relations with others. And He will show us. That way, communication stays clear, and friendships stay bright.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

FRIDAY 3.3.23 - Psalm 15

Various familiar passages of Scripture provide lists of how a believer should live and think, examples are the 10 Commandments in Exodus 20 and the Beatitudes in Matthew 5. In Psalm 15 David also considers what the actions, attitudes, and character of someone should be in order to please God and dwell in His sacred tent. For us that sacred tent would be Heaven. One's walk should be blameless and pure; talk should be honest and positive; attitudes should be correct: hating what is evil and honoring what is good; character should be honest, faithful, dependable, charitable, and above reproach in all our dealings. Of course, we should strive to please God in our conduct and interactions with others, but perfection on our part is impossible. Daily we should be thankful that God Himself provided for our salvation and assurance of eternity with Him in Heaven. John 3:16 shows the way.

SPACE FOR REFLECTION

SUNDAY MORNINGS – 9:40am

- Kids** CHILDREN'S CHURCH (Ages 4 – 4th Grade)
 LOCATION: Kid's Wing on the Lower Level
available during the 9:40 service
 NURSERY (through Age 3)
 LOCATION: Kid's Wing on the Lower Level
available during the 9:40 service
- Youth** YOUTH GROUP (5th – 12th Grade)
 LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)
- Adults** SPRING QUARTER BEGINS MARCH 5TH
 LOCATION: B8-10 with Lane Kemler
Explore the Bible - *John, chapters 12-21*
 LOCATION: B11 with David Hamilton
Masterwork - *Unfailing Love in Uncertain Times, a study of 1 John by J. Ryan Wicker*
 LOCATION: B1-2 with Barry Wills
God Owns it All - *A 6-week study of financial principles that are affirmed by the authority of scripture and tested by the marketplace by author, Ron Blue*
 LOCATION: Rm 2 (next to office) with Irene Hess
Share Your Story - *This 4-week study for ladies will help you share your faith by recognizing God's presence in your life, identifying, and sharing your story and living out your faith*

SUNDAY EVENINGS – 6:00pm

- Kids** MESSIAH KIDS (Ages 4 – 4th Grade)
 LOCATION: Kid's Wing on the Lower Level
- Youth** YOUTH GROUP (5th – 12th Grade)
 LOCATION: Youth Activity Center (across street)
5th–8th Grade meet downstairs
9th–12th Grade meet upstairs
- Adults** DIVE DEEPER WITH DOUG
 LOCATION: Worship Center

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS – 6:00pm

Meal followed by the study Ephesians by J.D. Greear
 LOCATION: FAC and lower-level classrooms

WOMEN'S STUDIES

- Thursdays** LOCATION: YAC 9:00am - 11am - Beginning 3/16
Jude, by Jackie Hill Perry
- Mondays** LOCATION: B8-10 - 6:30 - 8:30pm - Beginning 3/20
Decluttering by Faith, by D. Madsen & D. Kokku

TO SIGN UP OR REQUEST MORE INFORMATION FOR ANY GROUPS OR CLASSES, PLEASE USE THE CONNECT CARD IN YOUR BULLETIN. THANK YOU!

Acts 25:1-12
That's Not Fair!

In Caesarea, Paul stands trial first before Marcus Antonius Felix and then before Porcius Festus. Paul has Roman citizenship, and he exercises his right to appeal to Caesar. Once the appeal is granted, Paul's case would be out of the governor's hands. Paul would be transferred to Rome to stand before Emperor Nero.

Lessons from Paul's experience in Caesarea:

Application #1–

R_____ that life isn't always _____

- Ecclesiastes 8:14
- 2 Thessalonians 1:6

Application #2–

R_____ with a proper _____

- Philippians 4:11
- Philippians 2:18
- Philippians 4:4

Application #3–

R_____ in God's _____ for you

- Philippians 1:12-13
- Philippians 4:22
- Romans 5:3-4
- 2 Corinthians 1:4

A man is happy so long as he chooses to be happy, and no one can stop him. ~ Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn



February 27th – March 3rd

INTRODUCTION:

Part of our purpose and strategy as a church is to Edify and Equip (E2) every believer. We desire to see every person take their next step with God, both individually as well as with families and small groups (E2 Communities). This devotional is to aid us in just that. We invite you to join us in daily devotion.

OVERVIEW:

Monday's and Tuesday's readings will be a follow up on Sunday's message "That's Not Fair!" from Senior Pastor Doug Lyon. Wednesday's through Friday's devotions will help prepare us for the message on 3.5.23, "Who's The Crazy One?" from Senior Pastor Doug Lyon.

KEY/MEMORY VERSE: "Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified." Acts 20:32