

Intro: *I have always found it interesting that Jesus taught us that it is not our Buildings, Our theology, Our Programs: UNITY*
Jn 13:24-35 *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

As we work our way through the Sermon on the Mount, I'm not going to look at every single detail, of every single issue that Jesus brings up. Not much disagreement about murder, hate, adultery, lying, revenge, swearing, prayer. Agreed!
And, notice this...these are at their CORE all relational issues! So today that's what I want to talk about: UNITY

When you get to the topic of forgiveness...unity...dealing with broken relationships...we struggle. In church...and OUT!
Relational unity is so important to Jesus, and to the Father, that when Jesus is beginning His public ministry, and laying out the ground rules for disciples...UNITY is one of the first things He talks about! In fact, if you look at major sermons or messages of Jesus unity and relationships is one of the themes in every single major sermon He preached!

Mt 5:17-20 Pg 683

"Healing Broken Relationships"

1. Broken Relationships In ANY Area Of Life Affect EVERY Area Of Life! Vs 21

- You see this reality referenced in vs 21: Going to Worship God...Broken w/ brother (either world or church) STOP!
Here is what you cannot miss. My relationship with others...affects my relationship with God!
IN fact, so significant...Jesus said...LEAVE YOUR GIFT AND GO BE RECONCILED!
- That is true across the board, in EVERY relationship.
- SELF: If you don't "like" yourself...If you aren't comfortable in your own skin. If you can't forgive yourself
That self-hate will poison every single relationship in your life.
"Love your neighbor as yourself" BUT: IF you can't love yourself...then you can't love your neighbor right!"
Illus: *If you can't forgive YOURSELF...you will never be able to forgive others..."*
- GOD: If you aren't Loving God correctly...there is NO way you are loving others correctly!
1Jo 4:20 *"If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen."*
- WORLD: If you aren't Loving the people of the world...then you aren't loving God. God LOVES people!
Jn 3:16: *"For God so loved the world..."* If you love God...then you love what He loves!
Notice this: Jesus loved broken people, outcast, sinner, rejected, unclean, unloved, thrown aside, marginalized
Many times today in church...we don't love the way we should...
Illus: Arundel Lodge: People with disabilities: Simple easy, practical way to share the love of Jesus!

APPLIC: Think of this issue like a trampoline...or a spider web. What happens on one side...affects the other!

2. We Bear Personal Responsibility To Seek To Heal Broken Relationships Regardless Of Who Is "At Fault!" vs 23

This is a key principle that Jesus teaches us. In order to fully grasp it you need to look at two verses together.

CHURCH/Personal Relationships

- 5:23: "Remember that your brother has something against you." (You have offended him, YOUR fault) YOU GO
 - 18:15: "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault" (He offended you, HIS FAULT) YOU GO
- GOD RELATIONSHIP:** You and you alone can deal with your personal relationship with God.
Not your parents, wife, husband, Pastor, SS teacher...Everyone stands before God alone!
- Isa 55:6 *"Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near."* 1 Peter *"Draw near to God..."*
Illus: "I'm waiting for God to make Himself real!" WROTE It in a book, handed it to you, History, His Son!!!
- SELF:** One of the hardest broken relationships to heal...is in your own heart. When you have failed, sinned, KNOW IT
- Ps 19:12 *Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.*
- WORLD:** God has placed in OUR hands the opportunity and responsibility of reconciling the world to Himself
I don't know why...I wouldn't have done it...But He did...and there is NO backup plan!
- 2Cor 5:17-20 *"Gave us the ministry of reconciliation...Implore you on His behalf...be reconciled to God!"*

APPLIC: In every area...Whether self, Others, God, the world...God has given us responsibility to reconcile!

3. God Wants Us To Keep "Short Accounts" In The Area Of Broken Relationships. Vs 23

Many times we are slow to "go" and slow to receive the one that has hurt us and we have a broken relationship with.
That is the opposite of what Jesus tells us to do!

Vs 25: Quickly: Lit = *without delay, readily, easily, and/or quickly*

- **Eph 4:26:** *Angry, don't sin, Don't let sun go down...*
- **Heb 12:15:** *Don't let root of bitterness spring up*

Illus: All too often we are slow to seek healing and forgiveness. We allow it to "marinate" get stronger, live longer, grow deeper
The longer it goes on...the worse it becomes! Jesus tells us, seek healing and reconciliation, and do it quickly

Applic: The only person we are hurting...is ourselves...when we allow that hurt, pain and that bitterness to live.
God wants you to be set free from that!

4. Forgive Without Any Reservation Or Condition.

6:12;14-15

There are a lot of reasons Jesus gives us for this...some have to do with God...some with others...some with self interest!

- Opens us up to God's forgiveness: *If we don't forgive others...God doesn't forgive us!* 14-15
- It makes us like God *Forgive as the Father forgave you* Col 3:13
- It frees you from bondage *Forgive and act; deal with each man according to all he does,* 1Kings 8:39
- Opens door for healing better relationship Paul and John Mark: (Place on other side of healing stronger, better)
Applic: Couple men in my life...gone through extremely difficult times...broken...restored...better...purified, tested
- Testimony of your relationship with God:
 - >He uses all things for good: Don't forgive...you deny that!
 - >He has truly transformed you: Don't forgive...those watching you don't believe anything else you say
 - >He is love and grace is greater than any offence.

CONCL: Do you want the world to know you are truly His disciple?

Then keep your relationships healthy and strong...

And when they break...Fix them!

Choose to lay down your rights...and follow in the footsteps of Jesus

Today we celebrate Lord's Supper...A reminder of the price that was paid for OUR forgiveness
And a Reminder...to check the relationships in our life...to make sure...we have no unsettled accounts

Listen to Scripture: 1 Cor 11:23ff

4 Questions:

1. Is my relationship with God broken? Sin need to confess?
Do I even HAVE a relationship with The Father?

2. Is my relationship within not right? Something I can't seem to forgive myself for? If so...deal with it

3. Is my relationship with others right...Do I need to GO?

4. Is my relationship with the WORLD right? Am I Going...seeking to reconcile others.

I challenge you to ask those questions...not to bring Guilt or Shame...But to bring clarity and conviction

Then...if you need to make something right...DO IT!

And if that means you choose today to "leave your gift" of worship...and not participate...Go and Fix...then return...Do that!