

June 2nd Sermon notes

Main Idea: To Err is human, to forgive is truly Divine.

Text Passage: Romans 8:28 "And we know that for those who love God and are called according to his purpose, all things work together for good".

Family is the breeding ground for forgiveness training.

Our ability to forgive others is enabled through knowing the magnitude of our forgiveness.

Family, just the mere word brings a smile to my face. Now go with me for a bit and think of Family.

Family speaks of **belonging**. One of the ways we know something is good is that it is in high demand. Most people want to be part of a family, want to belong to a family and enjoy being a part of a family.

If we happen to end up in a family that doesn't meet the ideal, we seek out one.

It doesn't even have to be a human family that brings a smile. How many of us smile when we see a family of ducks crossing the street? We may not even be duck lovers per se' but seeing the mama duck walking by followed by little ducklings, is likely to stop traffic. It's their **togetherness** that charms us.

Family speaks of **familiarity**. It's a concept that crosses all cultures. It's as old as civilization itself.

Family: God gave us Family and everything God made is good. (Adam+Eve)

Defined: Family (from Latin: familia) is a group of people related either by consanguinity (by recognized birth) or affinity (brought together by shared characteristics).

People nowadays spend money and time discovering their family origins. It's important! From a medical standpoint, it's important to know family background because we now know that certain genetic traits appear in succeeding generations.

Family is strong- family allows us to accept the unacceptable. The things we don't accept from a stranger, we will take it from a "family" member. Have you ever visited someone else's family gathering? That family member shows up wearing clothes from another era, they stick out for one reason or another. But everyone accepts them because why? They are family.

God gave us family for a reason. We needed to be able to see what He had in mind for those He would call His own.

I know you are probably thinking about all the messes associated with Family.

The brokenness in our families, society's families.

But let us be reminded that what God creates is good. Psalm 30:18 says, "As for God, His way is perfect."

The structure of the family seems to be upended. Family comes with brokenness, strife, and heartbreak. But once again, there is triumph.

A good movie has several elements for me. First, it projects the ideal, then enters the antagonist, and then when all seems lost, there is triumph.

Kevin has a T-shirt that says, "I've read the final chapter, God wins"! What I would like to get across today is that There is hope for the family and it's in **Forgiveness**.

The word for today is Forgiveness. There is redemption for the family in Forgiveness.

Let's take some time to look at an example of the redemptive work of forgiveness in the family.

Genesis 17 reveals the story of Abraham, the actual First Family of the covenant.

If ever there was a family that should exemplify God's original intent for family that being, belonging, acceptance, unconditional love, true forgiveness it should have been this family.

As with all families, there were many similarities in the first family of the covenant.

Number one: They each received a personal message from God that set them on a course of discovery.

Abraham, Issac, Jacob, His 12 sons became heads of the 12 tribes of Israel

- **Abraham Genesis 12:1; 15:4**
- **Genesis 26:23** we read that Isaac "went up to Beer-Sheba." "And that very night the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not be afraid, for I am with you and will bless you and make your offspring numerous for my servant Abraham's sake."
- **Genesis 32- Jacob's encounter with the angel of God**
- Fast forward a bit to one of Jacob's sons- to the story of Joseph

This is a fascinating story of a family- there is betrayal, with the theft of a birthright, there is homicidal ideation (Genesis 27 Rebeka tells Jacob that only thing consoling his brother Esau is the thought of killing his brother)

There are many similarities. However, they were also individuals with unique characteristics.

- 2 of them had a name change after their encounter with God

Abram means exalted father and Abraham means father of a multitude

Jacob means supplanter-Israel – Someone who struggles with God- or a man seeing God.

- **Beloved of God- remember that though you are born with many similarities to your natural family- your encounter with God changes everything.**

It was forgiveness that saved this family.

Joseph's great-grandfather was Abraham.

Joseph was nearly killed by his brothers and was **sold into a life of servitude by them**. His brothers lied to their father and told him that he was killed by a wild animal. After some time, he ended up holding their lives in his hands. He forgave them the great wrong he endured at their hands. He makes this statement: **Genesis 50: 20, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."**

- **The pathway to redemption for this family was Joseph's ability to forgive his brothers.**
- **He was able to forgive because God showed him the bigger picture.**

God is able to cause all things to work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28 "And we know that for those who love God and are called according to his purpose, all things work together for good".

- **We too can take hold of the bigger picture with this verse.**

A. We have natural families, but we are also members of a spiritual family.

- **Acts 2: 42-47** describes the early church's interaction with one another as one where daily they would eat together in their homes, share their possessions.. (family-like behavior)
- **Matthew 12:48-50 and Mark 3:33-35 say that Jesus asked, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?" and then pointed to his disciples or those around him and said, "Look, these are my mother and**

brothers". He went on to say that anyone who does the will of God is his brother and sister and mother.

- We are joined together as a spiritual family
- Ephesians 1: 3-6 The Message Bible. **How blessed is God! And what a blessing he is! He's the Father of our Master, Jesus Christ, and takes us to the high places of blessing in him. Long before he laid down earth's foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love, to be made whole and holy by his love. Long, long ago he decided to adopt us into his family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure he took in planning this!)**
- So we see the natural family construct gives us context and a tangible example for the spiritual family that we are now a part of.

B. Just as natural families are plagued and affected by the result of sin, spiritual families are also impacted by the fact that we are in a fallen world, live in fleshly bodies, and have an enemy of God seeking to influence us.

As a spiritual family, we will face situations that call for us to forgive.

- **Colossians 3:13**

"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone".

- **Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one. another, as God in Christ forgave you." - Ephesians. 4:32.**

So what course of action do we take when we are wronged by a member of our spiritual family?

1. We have a responsibility to let the person know that they have wronged us.

- **Matthew 18:15-16 "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they 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 we don't do this..the world wins, the flesh wins, the devil wins!

2. We cannot do this on our own. Our main idea states that to forgive is divine. Divine intervention is needed to bring us to a point where we can forgive from the heart. (Matt 18:35)

- When we have been deeply wounded by another, especially someone we call family, we need divine intervention to fully forgive.

- This is not on the same level of irritation we experience from some stranger cutting us off on the highway, although (may we receive divine enablement for them as well).
- We may experience, hurt from a Christian brother or sister.
- When Jesus cried from the cross” Father forgive them”. We realize that He had suffered a great wrong. **John 1:11 “ He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.” We may never know how wounded Jesus was by this rejection. Yet He cried out..**
- **FATHER FORGIVE THEM!**

Matthew 18 goes on to say..that after someone brings a witness and it is obvious there was an injury to a family member.. “ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

Jesus describes the worst-case scenario of someone who refuses to right a wrong.

- **Romans 12: 18 As far as it depends on us, be at peace with all men. We make the honest effort in love through faith in the resurrected Christ**

Here is where we often quote this passage out of context. The context of the verses in Matt 18: Remember we are talking about not being able to forgive on our own.

¹⁸“Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be^[e] bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be^[f] loosed in heaven.

¹⁹“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

Jesus is saying if you bring the matter to me, recognize that truly you cannot heal on your own, you will experience my presence with you.

More instruction

- **Matthew 5: 23-24 "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there in front of the altar. First, go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.**
- In context, the therefore is there because Jesus was talking about the seriousness of expressing anger to a brother or sister. (I’ll let you read about it)
- . if I am scheduled to sing but remember that during choir rehearsal, I snapped at George, and he looked a bit taken aback because of it. I must first go let George know that I am sorry and ask him to forgive me, then go offer my gift of praise on the choir.
- Just as the savior carries us into the presence of the Father, without blame, He carries us along the path of forgiveness. His path leads to health, healing, and wholeness. **I John 2: 1 says we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense” We have help!**

3. Be real about how the situation has impacted you.

- **Matthew 18: 21 Peter came to Jesus and asked, Lord how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me?**

Seven??????

- **Don't you just love Peter- He keeps it one hundred!**

Jesus relayed this story to bring home the point as to why we should seek to forgive. Read verses 22-35

- **Bottom line- we have been forgiven, therefore we should forgive!**
- **Jesus taught the disciples to pray" forgive us our trespasses even as we forgive those who have trespassed against us".**
- **When Jesus cried from the cross" Father forgive them**
- **FATHER FORGIVE THEM! Forgive because there is something greater coming- Redemption is coming, salvation is coming, so Father forgive them.**

The pathway for our adoption was forgiveness!

Pastor writing about forgiveness stated" Forgiveness is not only an action; it is also a process. Joseph didn't arrive overnight in a state of benevolence toward his brothers. It is important to be kind to ourselves as we wrestle with recurring, painful emotions. We cannot demand that our feelings change, (He desires truth in the hidden part)but nor do we have to throw a banquet for them either. When the hurt, anger, resentment and desire for revenge come knocking, a constructive option is to open the door, so to speak, and escort them into the presence of the Lord. (an example of this in scripture Luke 12: 13-21 is when someone came to Jesus and said, "Tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." Jesus went on to instruct him on the dangers of greed and the importance of storing up treasure in heaven) Pastor provided an example of a prayer we can pray, " Lord I have chosen to forgive now please help me address this negative feeling that has come calling" Any feeling can become a tool to build our relationship with the Lord.

Indeed Forgiveness is a pathway to redemption for the family