ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Follow Me

A life worth sharing.

WEEK THREE

FOLLOW ME

THE WAY TO FREEDOM
COLOSSIANS 3:12-17
MAY 7/8, 2022
PASTOR GARY J WATKINS

As you open in prayer, ask the Spirit of God to bring your will and heart into harmony with His. Note any new insights from the sermon. Did anything surprise you? If the Lord spoke to you, what did you hear?

Read John 4:31-34 slowly and aloud. Pause and reflect on any word or phrase that stands out to you. Read it again and pay attention to how the disciples on not on the same page as Jesus. Reflect on some of the decisions that you have made and the motivation behind them. How is your life's "food' like Jesus'? What is the main driver for you?

Read, aloud and slowly Colossians 3:12-17. What three things does the opening verse say about you?

Can you see that the one who follows Jesus as a disciple, is called to this new way of life? Kingdom Culture? We, in Christ, are new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17), being transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12: 1-2) and molded into the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). An important part of this "new life" is to, "forgive whatever grievances you have against one another." What is the difference between remorse, forgiveness, and reconciliation? What has been hard for you about forgiving others that have hurt you or your loved ones?

HERE ARE SOME THOUGHTS ON FORGIVENESS FROM PASTOR GARY FORGIVENESS:

1.Is not deserved. This word forgiveness in this passage comes from the word grace or gift. Forgiveness is undeserved grace you are bestowing on someone as Christ bestows His grace on you;

2.Assumes the person is guilty. What they did was wrong, and they have created debt to you. Another word for forgiveness means "to cancel a debt" cf. Matthew 18:23-35;

3.Does not look to excuse the behavior or mitigate it;

4.Is not a feeling! Jesus tells us to forgive often cf. Matthew 18:21-22. This is not possible if it is a feeling. What we often mean is that when I feel better (no longer hurt) then I will forgive. How is this not forgiveness? See how Jesus forgave in the midst of His pain cf. Luke 23:34;

5.Is a choice of your will to obey Jesus and do life as He commands;

6.May not lead to reconciliation. The person who hurt you may not be remorseful or want to reconcile. They may not be safe, and you may need to set boundaries;

7.Allows you to take back control of your life. If you avoid a person, place, or thing because of what was done and the feelings you have about it you may wish to reflect on whether you are being controlled by their hurtful actions;

8.Forgiveness will free you from Satan's snare. The direct assault is what was done. The snare is the unforgiveness, bitterness, anger, and resentment we hold onto. cf. Hebrews 12:15;

9.Opens the door to Christ's healing. Jesus, on the cross, bore your sin and griefs. cf. Isaiah 53:4. Obedience opens our heart to the healing work of God's Spirit;

10. Gives you the last word and light triumphs over darkness through you.

LIVING INTO THE WORD

How do I forgive?

1. Find a quite time and place with a pad of paper and pen. Write down the things you are aware of. Make them specific i.e., I forgive Joe for stealing from me.

2. Ask the Spirit of God to search you cf. Psalms 139: 23-24 and reveal to you those He wants you to forgive. Write them on your list.

3. Speak aloud forgiveness in Jesus' Name cf. Colossians 3:17 i.e., In the Name of Jesus Christ, I forgive Joe for stealing from me. Do this for each person/item on your list.

4. Go back over your list and bless each person cf. Matthew 5:44. Blessing is the imparting of good to another, i.e., In the Name of Jesus Christ, I bless Joe with the peace of God.

5. Renounce the anger, bitterness, unforgiveness and resentment you have held for people. Do this aloud and in Jesus' Name.

6. Ask your Father in heaven to forgive you for being unforgiving and giving place to the darkness listed in #5 cf. Matthew 5:7, 6:12.

7. Ask Jesus Christ to heal your heart that was wounded and fill you with His light and peace.

Spend time in the quiet of His presence.