

Grace Under Pressure

“True character is revealed in the choices a human being makes under pressure - the greater the pressure, the deeper the revelation...”

Judas’s Betrayal

13:21,27

Now Jesus was deeply troubled, and he exclaimed, “I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me!”...When Judas had eaten the bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus told him, “Hurry and do what you’re going to do.”

Peter’s Denial

13:37-38

37 “But why can’t I come now, Lord? “I’m ready to die for you.” Jesus answered, “Die for me? I tell you the truth, Peter—before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me.

- Jesus said this right in the middle of some of the most intense relational hurts of his life
 - Some of the worst wounds and deepest hurts...
 - From the people he loved and trusted the most...

John 13:34-35

So now I am giving you a new commandment: **Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”**

Love is So Much More Than Just Reciprocal

Matthew 5:43-48

43 “You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. 44 But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! 45 In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. 46 **If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that?** Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. 47 **If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else?** Even pagans do that. 48 But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

1. Believing the Best

1 Cor. 13:7

Love bears all things, **believes all things**, hopes all things, endures all things.

- Stop Assuming the Worst...
- Stop Listening to Disparaging Words About a Brother or Sister...
- Don’t let your heart or others shape your thoughts or perspective towards people...
- It becomes a horrible spiral of evil – the devil’s playground...

Ecc1 7:20-22

20 Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who *continually* does good and who never sins. **21** Also, do not take seriously all words which are spoken, so that you will not hear your servant cursing you. **22** For you also have realized that you likewise have many times cursed others.

2. Refuse to take Offense

1 Cor. 13:5 Love keeps no record of being wronged...

- We **Minimize our mistakes**, thoughts, misunderstandings,
- We **Maximize mistakes of others**.
- Part of us that WANTS to believe the Offense so that we can justify or focus on ourselves...

Matthew 6:14-15

“If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

- **It Clogs the Flow of God’s Love Through You...**

Mark 11:25

But when you are praying, first forgive **anyone you are holding a grudge against**, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too.”

Matthew 5:23

Therefore, if you are presenting your offering at the altar, **and there remember that your brother has something against you**, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

Sermon Series Coming Up 4/26

Overcoming Offense