

“The Christian’s New Clothes: Forgiveness”

Ephesians 4:31-32

C.I.T.—Treat one another the way the Lord treats us.

Purpose—I want to set a bar of expectation for how we should behave and respond to one another.

Introduction—John 13:35—The way we treat one another impacts our ability to win the world to Jesus.

- I. Take out the Trash
 - a. Let it be taken away
 - i. Removed, destroy, abolish
 - ii. Total destruction and abandonment of this type of behavior
 - b. Descriptions of this behavior
 - i. Bitterness
 1. Undrinkable water, bitter fruit, poison
 2. Figuratively for heart bitterness—**Heb 12:15; Acts 8:23**
 3. Revealed in our speech—**Rom 3:14**
 4. Someone spoke to us or treated us badly
 5. The church made a decision that I don’t agree with.
 6. A leader is leading in a direction I don’t like.
 7. This root of bitterness swells up inside of you and is allowed to fester and spread, making your disposition bitter.
 - ii. Anger/wrath
 1. Thumos—quick tempered blow up
 2. Orge—slow burning furnace
 3. Used together to describe all types of anger
 - iii. Shouting
 1. Krauge—onomatopoeia—crows cry
 2. Clamor of excited persons barking back and forth and not really listening to each other
 3. House of Commons in England
 - iv. Slander
 1. Blasphemia
 2. Slander, defamation and abusive speech
 - v. Kakia, malice or ill-will
 - c. The bitterness that we allow to fester in our hearts, will make its way out unto anger and fighting.
 - d. This is not the type of followers Jesus wants, nor that the world wants to join.
 - e. We must eradicate this behavior from our lives and our church.
 - f. Illus.—Miss trash day, accumulates and stinks
 - g. Application
 - i. The way we take out the trash is through confession of sin.
 - ii. **1 John 1:8-10**--We confess to God
 - iii. **Matthew 5:23-24**—We confess to one another.
 - iv. We must consistently and intentionally take out the trash.
- II. Fill up with goodness.
 - a. Be kind
 - i. Pleasant, gracious, benevolent
 - ii. Concerned with the needs of others
 - b. Be compassionate
 - i. Eusplagxnos—eu—good/healthy, splagxnos—intestines or guts
 - ii. Heart/guts represent the seat of emotions

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- iii. When someone has “good guts” toward someone else, they have compassion and are tenderhearted toward that person
- iv. They are concerned for their wellbeing, not their own personal pride.
- v. Kindness and compassion are antithetical to bitterness, and will not allow it.
- c. Be forgiving
 - i. Xarizomai—charis—to give freely
 - ii. Figuratively to forgive, not holding sin against the other
 - iii. This freely given does not necessarily require that person to ask for forgiveness, but is quick to forgive.
 - iv. This means that we give them the benefit of the doubt, we don’t believe gossip about them until verified, and sure don’t spread it.
- d. Just as the Lord did to us.
 - i. God’s Kindness and Mercy—**Luke 6:35, Psalm 86:5**
 - ii. **Romans 2:4**
- e. Illus.—Golden rule—treat others as you would have them treat you...have you ever said something or done something that you regretted? How did you want the other person to respond?
- f. Application
 - i. If we have kindness, compassion, and a forgiving spirit, then we will not have room for bitterness and fighting.
 - ii. If our cup is filled with goodness, then there will be no room for bitterness.

Conclusion

- Just as God forgave you...
- If we fail to love other as Christ loved us and fail to forgive other like Christ forgave us, then we show ourselves to be out of step with Jesus.
 - **1 John 4:7-8**
 - **Matthew 6:14-15**
 - If you claim Christ, but don’t exhibit love and forgiveness for the brothers, maybe its time to take out the trash.
- How did God forgive you?
 - God had this attitude toward you.
 - You are a sinner and deserved the bitter wrath and anger of God.
 - Yet, while we were still sinners Christ died for us.
 - If we “get in Christ” by accepting Him as the Lord of our life, God will freely forgive our sins.
- Invitation to repent and believe.

1 John 4:7 Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love. (1 Jn. 4:7 CSB17)

Matthew 6:14 "For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you as well. ¹⁵ But if you don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your offenses. (Matt. 6:14 CSB17)

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Hebrews 12:15 Make sure that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no root of bitterness springs up, causing trouble and defiling many. (Heb. 12:15 CSB17)

Acts 8:23 For I see you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by wickedness." (Acts 8:23 CSB17)

Romans 3:14 Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. (Rom. 3:14 CSB17)

1 John 1:8 If we say, "We have no sin," we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say, "We have not sinned," we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 Jn. 1:8 CSB17)

Matthew 5:23 So if you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. (Matt. 5:23 CSB17)

Luke 6:35 But love your enemies, do what is good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High. For he is gracious to the ungrateful and evil. (Lk. 6:35 CSB17)

Psalms 86:5 For you, Lord, are kind and ready to forgive, abounding in faithful love to all who call on you. (Ps. 86:5 CSB17)

Romans 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of his kindness, restraint, and patience, not recognizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? (Rom. 2:4 CSB17)