



Sermon Notes — Pastor Thomas Keys, SRMBC

The Hope Of Easter V — Jesus, Be A Fence (From our Offence) Scriptures: Luke 17:1—10

INTRODUCTION

The Hatfield's and McCoy's, were two American Appalachian mountaineer families that engaged in a legendary feud that attracted nationwide attention in the 1880s and '90s

The origins of the feud are disputed. Some attribute it to hostilities formed during the American Civil War, Some to Rand'l McCoy's belief that a Hatfield stole one of his hogs in 1878. Sadly, the feud led to the death of 13 of the family members. The feud went on for decades and caused so much pain because neither side tried to forgive one another. Lately, we've been forced to spend time with each other in close quarters. And since we're in relationship, we need to model the forgiveness that Jesus provided for us on the Cross.

SERMON POINTS

We are continuing in our Sermon Series: The Hope of Easter – from selected Scriptures in The Gospel of Luke. Today, we are in Luke chapter 17 – Jesus had previously dealt with the hypocritical pharisees about how God has love for sinners and offers forgiveness and restoration for all who are willing to acknowledge their sin and put their faith in Him.

Now Jesus deals with relationships. And beloved, since you can't pick your earthly or church family, we are going to have disagreement from offences. The key is how we deal with them. So, what I want to do in this message is to go over what Jesus says about *His warning*, *His Ways To Address* and *His Wisdom To Attend to offences* - so we can allow Jesus to be our fence around our offences...

I. Warning Against Offences (vv. 1 – 2)

- ♦ **Offences Are Inevitable** – Jesus says that offences – even in the best of times, are going to come. Again, Jesus did not chose the most refined, or cultured people to be His apostles and one devil among them. Although your church, family may offend, Jesus knows all about our struggles and He will guide us through these offences in a way that gives God glory.

- ♦ **Offences Are Destructible** – Jesus says woe to those that bring offences. Now I am not talking about those days when we are a little “off” I hate break it to you, it doesn't matter how “anointed” you are everybody has those “days” moments when the old man creeps out. No, I am talking about a person who is always “Offended” and everywhere they go they spread that offense to every relationship, every job and even every church. Forgiveness is much less costly then the damage caused by being and spreading an offence.
- ♦ **Offences Will Be Regrettable** – Jesus says those folks whose mission is to bring offences and make others around them as miserable as they are, will eventually regret it. Especially when those offences harm children/new believers and causing them to stumble. You won't be able to get away with causing conflict and strife in God's Church or in God's family because it will not end well for you. Gal 6:7 says that we should not be deceived, God is not mocked – what we sow we will reap – if we sow offence, we will reap even more but we sow forgiveness ...

II. Ways to Address Offences (vv. 3 – 4)

- ♦ **Address In Relationship** - Note that Jesus says when a brother (or sister) sins against you ... Implying that this applies to fellow believers. We don't have time to argue with folks who don't have the Spirit of God – I don't have time (look I don't even buy green bananas ...) but with a brother/sister/wife/husband – when both are saved and have the same Heavenly Father, we are called to be in relationship with each other. We should be able to lovingly confess and confront one another – because *We Are Family...*
- ♦ **Address With Repentance** - I've said this before but when pastors counsel future husbands we sometimes admonish them to learn 2 phrases “I do” and “I'm Sorry” Truthfully, many of our relationships could be saved and healed if when we are wrong, we would be willing to go to the person and say “I'm sorry – I was wrong. Will you forgive me?” And when someone comes to you for forgiveness – we should accept it without conditions, - being willing to do it more than once or twice. Making things right with God will mean making things right with one another – not ignoring issues, but addressing them with truth and love...

- ◆ **Address Toward Restoration** - In Matthew's Gospel – Peter asks. "If my brother sins against me how many times do I forgive him—7 times?" Jesus replies "not 7, but **70 – 7 times.**" The point is not keeping count, but to restore the relationship. Now I am not talking about setting yourself up to be abused (which a fellow believer who knows Christ shouldn't be doing anyway) – but the principle is to restore the relationship. It may involve restitution or the re-building of trust, but the goal is to win your brother, to please the Lord and to be a witness to the world. People will see how God will forgive them, when they see believers forgiving one another.

III. Wisdom To Attend To Offences (vv. 5 – 10)

- ◆ **Attend To Offences Faithfully** – After Jesus tells the disciples how we are to forgive our brother when they come to us as many times as necessary, the disciples mentioned that they need more faith or to have their faith increased. Before I deal with that in the next point, you need to know that forgiveness is an act of **faith** not **feelings**. We've got to be forgiving to those who have offended us **before** we feel like it. If we wait for our feelings, we will never be able to move forward.
- ◆ **Attend To Offences Willingly** - Here's the point that really want to get to After hearing the disciples ask Jesus to increase their faith – Jesus responds that you already have faith enough to forgive. In fact, faith the size of a tiny mustard seed can move a tree or a mountain. In other words, the point is not **faith** but **willingness**. One of my peeves is when I ask someone to do something for me instead saying "yes" they hem and haw – indicating that deep inside they **could** but just aren't **willing** to. When you are unwilling, it makes everything difficult. Like giving – forgiving first requires a **willing mind**...
- ◆ **Attend To Offences Dutifully** Now before the disciples think that their/our willingness to give is something special, Jesus gives them an example of a servant obeying their master in not anything great – or out of the ordinary, but simply the normal, everyday duty to the Lord that saved and called us. In other words, as a church, a child of God, His sons and daughters, we have a duty to be just like Him and forgive those who hurt us – even when they don't deserve it. Just like the Father in Jesus Christ forgave us...

There's a story about a judge whose own son was brought before him for a crime he had committed. The judge felt a deep grief that his son would violate the laws upon which he based his entire life.

Would he just give him a reprimand in an act of mercy? Would she give him the minimum penalty for the offense? Much to their surprise, he handed down the maximum fine, upholding the law to its fullest degree.

But then something happened that nobody expected. he stepped down from the bench, took off his judge's robe, told his son how much he loved him and then paid, out of his own pocket, the fine she had just handed down.

And in a similar way, Jesus – took off His heavenly robes and put on Human flesh to be our Saviour and Substitute and Sin-bearer - Because of Jesus' sacrifice – we are forgiven – seen as not guilty. O come on. It is one thing to be declared "Not guilty" when you have not done anything wrong – but it is another thing to be declared "Not Guilty" for stuff you know you've done:

- He Was **Forsaken** – So We Could Be **Forgiven**.
- He Was **Rejected** - So We Could Be **Redeemed**.
- He Was **Wounded** - So We Could Be **Made Whole**.
- He Was **Punished** - So We Could Be **Perfected**.
- He was **Resurrected** – So we could be **Restored** to His family as a family.

As Jesus forgave us, let's forgive one another—so we can walk together as God's Family.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- ◆ What are some things that cause offences in relationships? How can we avoid or address these offences?
- ◆ How does knowing that is our duty—commanded by Jesus Himself, to forgive others, help us to not rely on our feelings?
- ◆ If we are finding it hard to forgive, how does Jesus' Words and Works provide the help we need?
- ◆ Is there anyone in your life that you need to forgive? Is there anyone you need to ask to forgive **you**? Make the call, send the text or email, today.