

Mother of God Community
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting
FORGIVENESS
Pat Skees – January 27, 2008

Love for Enemies NRSV Luke 6

1. ²⁷“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. ³¹Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³²“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Judging Others

³⁷“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

THE MESSAGE Luke 6

²⁷“To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. ²⁸When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer for that person. ²⁹If someone slaps you in the face, stand there and take it. If someone grabs your shirt, gift wrap your best coat and make a present of it. ³⁰If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more tit-for-tat stuff. Live generously.

1. ³¹“Here is a simple rule of thumb for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for *them*! ³²If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. ³³If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. ³⁴If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that’s charity? The stingiest of pawnbrokers does that.

³⁵“I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You’ll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we’re at our worst. ³⁶Our Father is kind; you be kind.

³⁷“Don’t pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults — unless, of course, you want the same treatment. Don’t condemn those who are down; that hardness can boomerang. Be easy on people; you’ll find life a lot easier. ³⁸Give away your life; you’ll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity.”

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Outline of Experience

- A. Event
 - 1. Fun turned into nightmare
- B. Experience
 - 1. Broken trust
 - 2. Abandonment
 - 3. Fear of freezing & dying
 - 4. No one to rescue me
- C. Forgiveness
 - 1. Sacramental freedom
 - 2. Nagging consequences
 - a. Inability to trust
 - b. Self reliance
 - c. Building my masks to hide self from others & God
- D. Decisions & Beliefs separating me from the Love & trust with God the Father & Others
 - 1. I am on my own to survive - no one else will really help me. (Mom, dad, God, priest, brother, nun, friend, boss, other leaders,...)
 - 2. I cannot really trust anyone - Never be vulnerable
 - 3. I am stuck in my habitual sin for the rest of my life. All my efforts at prayer, sacrifice, avoidance of sin, fasting and confession are fruitless to change my circumstances.
 - 4. I cannot trust another man to be a true friend - not even Jesus or the father.
 - 5. I cannot let anyone really know me - even myself or my wife.
 - 6. I can only set one boundary which excludes everyone - safe and unsafe people.
- E. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit & Community modified these over the years but never completely transformed my understanding of Jesus and the Father. It took healing and relinquishing my decisions and beliefs which were closely held to my heart.

QUESTIONS

- 1. Is there a time when you were hurt by parents, brothers/sisters, or other family members; or hurt by others, or by the church, community or individuals? Ask Jesus & the Holy Spirit to give you His help, then list the most important one or several.
- 2. Have you forgiven those who hurt you? Prepare to forgive them. Have you forgiven yourself for how you responded?
- 3. Pray and reflect on the decisions you made as a result of the hurt. What did you choose to do to protect yourself from future hurts? List them.
- 4. If you have a series of repetitive memories such as being punished, ignored, avoided, teased, received verbal, emotional or physical abuse, etc. then list what you felt and what you chose to believe about your experiences. Make a list and ask Jesus to help you have a better knowledge of your defenses to being hurt. Ask the Lord to reveal how you see Him as Father, Brother, friend, counselor, or God.

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5. What decisions have you made to protect yourself from others that involve your idea of self? Think of things as ways you see, talk to or about that lift you up or make you feel or appear better than they are. Ask the Lord to show you and ask Him to lead you through repentance and forgiveness.