

12 February 2017 - Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

Readings: Deut. 30:15–20; 1 Corinthians 3:1–9; Matthew 5:21–37.

INTRO: *The Arena of Healing, Part 3* – Matthew 5:7-8. Review parts 1 & 2: Humble, Emotionally Honest, Teachable, Proactive...



I. FORGIVING.

Matthew 5:7, “Blessed are **the merciful**, for they shall receive mercy.”

Lifekeys: *“I acknowledge the centrality of amazing grace. I need forgiveness and I need help, neither of which I deserve. As I need forgiveness and help, I understand that others need it also. I will seek to help others experience what I am seeking for myself. I will open my heart to the needs of others as I desire to have others be open to me. I will forgive as I desire to be forgiven. I will cease judging as I desire to escape from judgment.”*

Matthew 9:13, “**Go and learn** what this means: ‘**I desire mercy**, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

A. I need forgiveness. “But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘**God, be merciful to me**, a sinner!’” (Luke 18:13).

B. I need to forgive others. “For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” (Matthew 6:14-15).

C. I need to forgive God. “The man said, ‘The woman **whom you gave to be with me**, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.’” (Genesis 3:12).

D. I need to forgive me. “Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.” (James 5:16)



II. PURE MOTIVES.

Matthew 5:8, “Blessed are **the pure in heart**, for they shall see God.”

Lifekeys: *“I will cease playing games and undertake a rigorous moral inventory of my motives and behaviour. I determine to discover every unhealthy way within me and face it.”*

NEWSBOYS: “Dull as dirt, You can't assert the kind of light, That might persuade A strict dictator to retire, Fire the army, Teach the poor origami; The truth is in, The proof is when, You hear your heart start asking, ‘**What's my motivation?**’”

Psalms 139:23-24, “Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous (wicked) way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!”

Cf. Michael Jackson, *“Tell ‘em that it’s **human nature.**”*

Cf. 1 Corinthians 3:4, “I... could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. For when one says, ‘I follow Paul,’ and another, ‘I follow Apollos,’ are you not being **merely human?**”

1 John 1:7, 9; 3:3-6, “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son **cleanses us from all sin.** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and **purify us from all unrighteousness** ... And everyone who thus hopes in him **purifies himself as he is pure.... No one who abides in him keeps on sinning.**”



CONCLUSION: Luke 23:34, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” **John 13:10**, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is **completely clean.**”