

Wandering Heart

Small Group Study & Video Devotional Week Five - Teach Me

Matthew 18:15-22

¹⁵ “If your brother or sister sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If you are listened to, you have regained that one. ¹⁶ But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If that person refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸ Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

²¹ Then Peter came and said to him, “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?”

²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.”

New Revised Standard Version (updated edition)

Wandering in the Text

The Greek word translated as “bind” is δέω (deō), which also means to tie, confine, impede or hinder. The word translated as “loose” in Greek is λύω (luō), which also means to untie, break, or destroy.

- How do you understand Jesus’ statement that what we bind is bound in heaven and what we loose is loosed in heaven? And what might this have to do with forgiveness?

Some translate Jesus’ response to Peter’s question in Matthew 18:22 as “seventy-seven times,” others translate it as “seventy times seven.”

- What is the significance of this?
- Does this add to your understanding of God’s grace?

What do you think of Jesus’ step-by-step advice for dealing with conflict? Have you ever followed this when someone hurt you?

- How did that go?
- What would this look like if applied on a larger scale, such as in our criminal justice system?
- Are there specific situations or circumstances where you would choose not to follow this advice?

Read Matthew 18:17 closely. Jesus tells the disciples to treat those who refuse to listen as they would a gentile or tax collector.

- How do you interpret his instruction?
- Based on how Jesus treats gentiles and tax collectors, what kind of treatment does he intend?

Consider

What stands out to you about Chris' story?

How does Christ describe "being teachable"?

What does it meant to you?

How does Chris' story exemplify humility?

How does Chris' story demonstrate live-long learning?

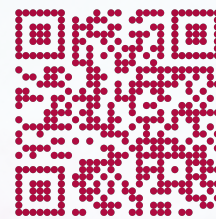
The things Chris "learned in prison" are good life lessons. Which one resonates with you? Why?

*"Only he who believes is obedient,
and only he who is obedient believes."*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

This quote has resonated with Chris in his life. How does it speak into your journey knowing Christ?

Watch Week Five Video



www.whpc.org/new-blog/2024/2/19/lenten-journey-small-groups

Teach me

Teach me about the ways of the wind,
about the ways of the world,
about the ways of the heart.

Teach me about the soft crook of my lover's arm,
and the way two souls can hold each other close.

Teach me about forgiveness, about the language
of *I'm sorry*

and the softness of sincerity.

Teach me about abundance, about

seventy-times-seven

and *all the days of my life*.

Teach me about joy, about its contagious weaving
and its soul-healing.

Teach me about mercy, about open hands and
deep breaths.

Teach me about the dawn of time and the stars
in the sky.

Teach me what matters most.

Teach me what is mine to do.

Teach this achingly curious heart

until I run out of questions

or I run out of days.

Teach me some melodious sonnet,

and I will have a life well-lived.

Poem by

Rev. Sarah Speed

Let us Pray

God of overflowing grace and goodness,
Help us to heed your call to compassion and forgiveness with each other and ourselves.
Open our hearts and minds to new directions and new paths that you set before us.
And lead us live into your love as we share it with others.

Amen