

Jumping Fish

12 - 1 Peter

Church on the Park | Sunday, 28 October 2012

Text: 1 Peter 3:8-12

Intro: The heart of today's passage was etched into Peter's soul when Jesus prophesied Peter's denial of him. At that time Jesus said to him, "As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:31-38). In 1 Peter 3:8-12 Peter is describing in detail what this kind of love looks like. Jesus is the standard. When Peter insulted Jesus by his denial, Jesus still blessed him. And we are called to walk in Jesus' footsteps.

"Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing" (Prov. 12:18 cf. Prov. 15:4)

1) There are five attitudes that we are called to possess as God's people

- These **attitudes** are the ingredients for **healthy** and **successful** relationships
- They are meant to be **reciprocated**—to flow from one believer to the other
- However, Peter takes us one step further: they are meant to be in action even when it is **not reciprocated**.
 - This is the main difference that sets us apart from the world
 - ***If we live like this fish will jump into the boat***
- What are the five attitudes?
 - Harmony, Sympathy, Affection, Kindhearted Compassion and Humility
 - **Harmony** - *homophron* - lit. 'one diaphragm' - like-minded, having the same attitude, having thoughts that follow along the same path. It means not being contentious and contrarian, complimenting someone's thoughts rather than contradicting. It is a lack of competition in relationships.
 - **Sympathy** - *sympathes* - lit. 'suffer with'. Feel sympathy. Notice how good relationships engage the emotions. Yes, this can be painful, but it very real.
 - **Affection** - *philadelphia* - lit. 'brotherly love'. Love or affection for fellow believers.
 - This leaves no room for the attitude, "I love Jesus, but don't like Christians."
 - **Kindhearted Compassion** - *eusplagxnos* - lit, 'noble bowels, good bowels.' deep compassion for another.
 - **Humility** - *tapeinophron* - having the attitude of humility
- These were all attributes that Peter would have **saw** and **felt** in Jesus as he walked with him. **Paul** would have known these things in the **Spirit**, but **Peter** saw it with his own two **eyes**.
 - He saw it in Jesus when he fed the five thousand. Compassion—even though there was a lack of resources. They were not able to give and yet they still stepped out in faith to give. He saw it as Jesus healed the multitudes. Peter remembers how Jesus treated his mother-in-law, going to her to heal her of a

fever. He heard the sympathy in his voice —that’s why Peter was ready to defend Jesus with his sword.

- Jesus felt the depths of our **weaknesses** in both the wilderness and the garden.
- Peter, though, missed one of the greatest displays of these attributes when he fell asleep in the garden.
- These attitudes were reflected in the **Beatitudes**. The Beatitudes teach us that these attitudes are rewarded—we will be happy and joyful if we cultivate them. Humility, Sorrow for others, Meekness, Spiritual Hunger, Mercy, Purity, Peace, even in the middle of insults & persecution.
- These attitudes are found in Jesus. That’s why having Jesus in you and relating to him continually is essential for you to walk in these things.

2) All these attitudes are evident by how much grace is on our tongues.

- Peter quotes from **Psalm 34**, a psalm that teaches us what it means to possess the fear of the Lord.
- By **your words** it is revealed whether you have these attitudes or not. And I’m not talking flattery here.
 - The test comes when we are sinned against and **insulted**.
 - When we are **squeezed**, what comes out of us? Mercy or negativity?
- Peter learned this way from Jesus. It’s a way that transcends justice and law.
 - Listen in as Peter sat at Jesus’ feet: **Luke 6:27-38**
- What distinguishes God’s people from even the good people in the world is that **when we are cursed, we bless**.
 - And we even have to practice this in the church
- The **tongue** is the major weapon that destroys good relationships.
 - The tongue cuts like a knife. It either injects healing or poison.
 - Churches divide because of the tongue.
 - The tongue is the hardest part of us to tame. It’s wild, unruly.
 - “The perverse stir up dissension, and gossips **separate** close friends” (Prov. 16:28)
 - Prov 10:19, 12:18, 12:19; 12:25; 13:3; 15:1; 15:4; 16:24, etc.
- We are not meant to just feel love for our brothers, but to live love by living to bless

3) Practice Blessing

- Learn to bless.
- Stop the **boomerang** effect that people cause with their words.
 - “**Keep** [your] tongue from evil and [your] lips from deceit”
 - Evil is not just murder and rape. It’s also gossip, slander and harming someone with your tongue.
 - We need to know God’s definition of evil, which is more exact than the world.
- What is a blessing?
 - **Psalm 20** is the model of blessing
- Speak to someone’s **potential** and **identity** in Christ, rather than to their actions.
- When there is an issue, go to the person rather than sharing it with others.

- Bless in prayer;
- Anna and I on the way to the train.
- Replace frustration with blessing
- My example from last week with someone who is not in our church.
- Matthew 15 and Matthew 12:36
- When our attitude and tongues are **right**, are prayers are **answered**.
 - “For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and his ears attend to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil”

Conclusion: If we live like this with our families, neighborhoods and church we will watch fish jump into the boat. People will know we are Christ’s disciples and will be drawn to the light.

Fish Jumping Into Boat: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_fUmx-HI0Q