



The *Sunday Recap* is a quick rundown of our time of worship together on Sunday and a quick look at next Sunday. Our hope is that this will help us continue to reflect on the good news of the gospel all week and prepare for the upcoming Sunday. Enjoy!

SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE ON:

Matthew 7:13-14 Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few

WORTHY QUOTE:

The character of God is *sacrificial, others-centered love*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- What reading, song lyric, or scripture stuck with you from Sunday and why?
- What thoughts or questions did you have from the sermon?
- What are some significant things that come from the understanding of sin as being selfishness at it's foundation?
- Are you naturally a person who thinks of others? Why is that? If it's not natural to you, why do you think it isn't?
- Have you ever received great love from someone? What was that like?
- How is the gospel "others-centered love"?

QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

- What does it mean to be "selfish"? Are you selfish?
- Can you stop being selfish if you try hard enough? Why or why not? (help them see that they can't because it's part of who they are as a "sinner")
- What does Jesus say to selfish people? (something like: "I love you. Let me show you how life is found in loving others!")
- What do you like best about Jesus' love for you?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

[“The Love of Jesus”](#) (a prayer) in *The Valley of Vision*
[The Depth of Christ's Love](#) by John Piper

SONGS WE SANG:

[Rejoice](#) by Dustin Kensrue
[Amazing Grace \(My Chains Are Gone\)](#) by Chris Tomlin
[Lord I Need You](#) by Matt Maher
[My Rock and My Redeemer](#) by Sojourn
[Jesus Messiah](#) by Chris Tomlin

READINGS:

Call to Worship

L: All who have gathered here, come now before the Lord.

C: We will come to the Lord, for surely he knows our hearts.

L: Though many frustrations and concerns tug upon your hearts,
bring them before the Lord.

C: We will come to the Lord, for surely he knows our burdens.

L: Open your hearts to him, for the Lord is gracious to receive you.

C: We will come to the Lord, for surely he knows us by name.

L: To the Lord belong all wisdom and power, open your hearts to his Word and find life.

C: We will come to the Lord, for surely his wisdom will satisfy our hearts.

Prayer of Confession

L: Merciful Father, forgive us the sins of our tongues

C: For deception and untruthfulness in our dealings with others; for resentment, coldness, impatience, and ill temper.

L: Forgive us for the sins of our eyes

C: For impurity in our glances and imagination; for seeking after more beauty, comfort, status, and wealth than you have given us.

L: Forgive us the sins of our hearts

C: For hard-heartedness toward you and our neighbors; for pride, self-absorption, self-pity; and above all for rebelling against you and doubting your love.

L: Father, remove our fear, envy and pride and melt our hearts with the good news of the Gospel.
Transform us by your grace to live wholly for your glory.

C: Take away our mourning and replace it with songs of joy, for it is in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:27

Let's celebrate this gift by greeting one another with the Peace of Christ this morning. And Please take care to greet anyone who might be new to our family.

Word of Assurance

He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. 1 Peter 2:22-25

Benediction

L: May the God of endurance and encouragement grant us to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together we may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:5-6)

Go in the name of the Father Son and the Holy Spirit,
Peace be with you!

C: And Also with you!

SERMON TEXT

Matthew 7:12-14

“So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

SERMON SUMMARY: Christianity’s foundation is not morality, but rather, others-centered love

SERMON NOTES

We often read the Bible with ears of morality, hearing everything as instructions for us to have a better morality. That is not the message of the Bible, however. In fact, Jesus spends a lot of time condemning that sort of thinking. What Jesus is talking about here is an others-centered love, the very love that He embodied.

There is an *EXPANSIVENESS* and a *NARROWNESS* to Jesus teaching here.

EXPANSIVENESS (v.12)

A summary of v.12 would be something like- “If I was in their shoes, what would I desire?” That is the question that should direct all relationships. This question would have never come to the minds of the religious elite (scribes and Pharisees) of Jesus day, however. They were thinking about how to appear more righteous and condemn those who weren't.

Relational Nature of Sin

An understanding of the relational nature of sin is helpful here. Consider the Apostle Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians 5:15-

“and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.”

Notice the nature of sin described there - *living for self* or *selfishness*, we might say. And how can we see sin if it is at it's root selfishness? In relationships. Without relationships we wouldn't see our sinfulness! We wouldn't see our lack of love for others and self-centeredness.

Because sin is not simply a *moral* problem, the solution must be more than teachings on morality. To think that our sinfulness (selfishness) would be healed by instruction is like trying to control a raging bull with a fishnet. Or fighting cancer with some vitamin C. Those just aren't appropriate to fit the problem.

What Jesus prescribes is death and resurrection. Which is why He says in John 3:7 - "You must be born again". He is saying to be right with God you need death to your current self and new life from a different stock. This is why it is so important that Jesus was born of a virgin. He is not in the line of Adam and therefore does not have a sinful nature (see Genesis ch.3). He is the new humanity that we need. Our hope is that His death on the cross could be our death (the death of our sinful self) and His resurrection to new life ours as well. Indeed that is what the Apostle Paul describes in Romans 6.

Romans 6:3-6

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

Relational Nature of the Law

Jesus says that this others-centered love is the summary of the law and prophets (first 5 books of the Bible). If we consider the Old Testament addressing the question- *Who is God*, then what Jesus is saying is that the summary of the character of God is - others-centered love. That is a fantastic summary of the gospel and also a description of the person of Jesus Christ. He is the embodiment of others-centered love as He dies for rebels and makes them sons. Our hope is not that we can achieve that type of love, but rather that if Christ takes up residence in our soul and church community, His divine love will live in and through us.

NARROWNESS

In verses 13 and 14 tell us of a narrowness to His kingdom. This is where we often put a moralistic overlay on what Jesus is saying (taking the 'narrowness' to mean living a moral life). But Jesus is talking about death to self, not moralistic commands. He is inviting us into living for others, not keeping away from "bad things".

This way is narrow because not many want to sign up for death. None of us would have either if He hadn't brought us kicking and screaming! Only those who understand themselves to be what the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12) describe are low enough to see themselves as dead and welcome Jesus message of new life in Him.

How do we grow in this sort of others-centered love?

By knowing more and more of the others-centered love that Jesus has loved us with. The more we know of that and are captured by it the more we will be convinced that others-centered love is beautiful and worth our life. May the life of Jesus in us produce such a beautiful thing!

PREPARE FOR THIS SUNDAY

To help you prepare your heart and mind for this Sunday, we encourage you to read the scripture & readings and listen to the songs we'll be singing this Sunday. May God prepare our hearts to hear what He has to say to us.

SCRIPTURE FOR THIS SUNDAY:

Matthew 7:15-20

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

SONGS FOR THIS SUNDAY:

[O Worship The King](#) by Chris Tomlin

[Depth of Mercy](#) by Red Mountain Church

[How Great Thou Art](#) by Page CXVI

[You Have Redeemed My Soul](#) by Page CXVI

READINGS FOR THIS SUNDAY

Call to Worship

L: Come, find life in Jesus! In him the enslaved find redemption, the guilty pardon, the unholy renovation;

C: In him is everlasting strength for the weak unsearchable riches for the needy, treasures of wisdom and knowledge for the ignorant, fullness for the empty.

L: We rejoice not only in the cross but in him crucified and slain, not only in forgiveness but in the one through whom atonement comes.

C: Your blessings are as secure as they are glorious! You have provided for all our needs, adopted us as your children and have promised to keep us forever

L: O Lord God, without the pardon of our sin we cannot rest satisfied, without the renovation of our nature by grace we can never rest easy, without the hope of heaven we can never be at peace.

C: All this we have in your Son Jesus; blessed be his name!

- Adapted from The Valley of Vision

Prayer of Confession

L: Lord we confess that we have tried to perfect ourselves with our own efforts,

C: Father, teach us to rely on Your Spirit.

L: Lord we have relied on our works to save us,

C: Father, teach us to rely on your finished work.

L: You have told us that, "the righteous shall live by faith."

C: Father, teach us to trust your word.

L: We have contented ourselves to remain captive to rules and restrictions.

C: Father, give us faith to rest in Christ and live by the Spirit.

This we pray in the sweet name of Jesus our Lord,

Amen!

Passing of the Peace

Christ Himself is our peace. He broke down the wall of hostility reconciling us to God through the cross, making one new man.

We now have Christ, so we now have peace, so let's take a moment to greet each other with that peace.

Word of Assurance

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

1 Peter 2:9-10

Benediction

L: Remember as you go throughout this week- There is NOTHING you can do to make God love you less. And there is NOTHING you can do to make God love you more. For in Christ we have all of His unending love.

Go in Grace.

Peace be with you!

C: And also with you!