

Second Sermon – **Four Passages = Series 'Together'** | Reconcile – Love – Confidence – Hope

**Series Big Idea – We are Stronger Together**

'I'm the king and I don't need anyone' – Uh...huh...Try that in chess | Try that in life

**We're stronger together...we must learn and apply the importance of Loving Relationships**

**BI – Loving Relationships Develop a Christian Community | Open to Leviticus**

Bible reading – **Slog through Leviticus** | Sacrifices no longer offered – Priesthood no longer exists

- Entire Religious System in Ancient Israel – Foundation for the Atoning Work of Christ

- God's Person – Work – Character | His Holiness – How Important Holiness is to God

**May not follow the Letter of the OT Law...Obey the Spirit of these Laws – NT Alludes to or Quotes Directly**

**This text = Building – Maintaining – Protecting Relationships – Through it 2 verses at a time - PRAY**

**Relationships are like bodies of water:**

- **Kiddie:** Shallow – Fun – Outgrown | **Community:** Varying Depths – Orbit common...kids work

- **Lap:** Purposeful – Invest...build strength | **Rivers:** Power...swift...take you...don't want to go

- **Oceans:** Greatest rewards & Greatest risks – Depths are limitless...Dangers are real | **5 Principles**

### 1. **There is no chance of relationship apart from grace (9-10)**

<sup>9</sup>“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the Lord your God.

- **Principles** - Commanded – Leave couple rows | 'Gleanings' – Not back over | Grapes on ground Mechanism for taking care of the poor and those who were traveling through Israel

- Running standard – 1/60<sup>th</sup> | 60 Acres – Leave one unharvested + whatever is on the ground

**The principle – Grace and generosity lay a foundation for relationships to be built upon**

**Grace filled Generosity = Sacrificially Caring for people the way they need to be cared for...not you want**

- **Why grain & grapes & not groundhogs?** It's what they needed – Different people...different care

- Poor and sojourners don't deserve grain or grapes they did not plant, cultivate, and protect

Neither will people extend grace filled generosity - **Stuff - Gospel – No chance...relationship...Jesus**

**No chance of relationship apart from grace – Hot Potato – Outsiders...needy...Family of Faith**

### 2. **There is no depth of relationship apart from honesty (11-12)**

“You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; you shall not lie to one another. You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.

Rules for social relationships – Stealing – False Dealings - Lying = Behaviors...alien to covenant ethic

- 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment | Build on each other...Steal – Deceive – Lie...I **swear to God**

**Profane the holy name of God - leveraging his goodness - to weasel out of what He's forbidden**

**The principle – Relationships break when we eliminate honesty and deal in deception**

**Anybody feel like you have a really good relationship with someone who lies to you?**

- **That's because there is no depth of relationship apart from honesty**

**Why is that? Trust is vital to relationships...and there is no trust without honesty**

- **Trust and honesty need to move in parallel – More trust...more transparency | Broken – Fix**

### 3. **There is no desire for relationship apart from respect (13-14)**

You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired worker shall not remain with you all night until the morning. You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the Lord. - **Who needs enemies with friends like that?!?**

Unjust act between the powerful against those unable to defend themselves

- Not paying wages immediately was cruel – Living hand to mouth | Buy food daily – Pay rent daily

**What kind of animal would curse the deaf – Put a stumbling block before the blind?!?! | **You and I****

**Principle – Never use your position or advantage to coerce another or show a lack of respect**

- Physically – Verbally – Mistreating – Misleading | Weaponizing a strength | **Autumn and I**

**You show a lack of respect long enough...you won't have anyone to disrespect...burn...alone!**

### 4. **There is no genuine relationship apart from justice (15-16)**

You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.

Never should injustice be done in rendering a legal judgment – **Powerful people influencing the law**

- Favoritism – regardless of status (poor rich) cannot be tolerated | Decisions based righteousness

**The principle – Preferential treatment should not be shown to people because of financial status**

- **Example – Is it wrong for wealthy people to give their money? Wrong wealthy in leadership?**

**It is wrong to wealthy people in positions they're not qualified for to get their money | I don't know**

**Second principle here** You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor: I am the Lord.

**The principle - If you're looking for the express lane to ruin relationships = Gossip & slander...guy**

- Spreading untruths or breaking confidences is the quickest way to ruin a relationship

- Reputation & Character Count – Spreading gossip...damages influence – discredits character

First century it could cost someone their life – **No different in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

**No place in Christianity for the court of public opinion** | Destroys lives – Christian voyeurism = problem

- **'Don't tell anyone, but...' people | Finding joy in another person's struggle or hardship = sin**

Preferential treatment – Gossip – Slander = injustice | Genuine relationships ruined by injustice

### 5. **There is no enduring relationship apart from love (17-18)**

“You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

**The principle – Self-sacrificing, self-giving love is the bond of all godly relationships**

- Love based on commitment...not feelings - Love that gives without the expectation of receiving

Love that is patient and kind – Does not insist on its own way – Bears all things believes all things

Hopes all things – Endures all things – It's love that ties us all together; & it's hate that tears us apart

**“You shall not hate your brother in your heart”** – Hate in your heart, your relationships won't endure

- Instead of harboring hate, we need to speak straight

**but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him.**

- You incur sin when you harbor anger...instead of talking it out

**Communication unlocks hatred of the heart – If hate is the state of your heart...relationship won't last**

- If getting even is your game (*vengeance*) – relationships won't last | **“Don't get mad...even”**

- Escalates the situation – Increases your guilt – Causes you to live in fear of retaliation

- Prefer *bearing a grudge* (refusing to forgive) is what you prefer...relationships are doomed

- The weight of a grudge, weight of holding something against another...increases over time

- If you don't let it go – forgive them – choose to show mercy...the weight will crush you

**There's a better way...God's way...to 'Love your neighbor as yourself'**

- Want the same things for others that you want for others – and to the same degree (*Ufda*)

**Blessing | Happiness | Honesty | Fulfillment | Justice | Respect | Grace | Generosity**

It is the only kind of love that sustains a relationship and causes it to endure

**Loving relationships develop a Christian community** – Each 2 verses 'I am the Lord'

- That isn't how the world is treating me! I know...we're set apart – Something different

When we, people set apart, commit to principles...it brings us together...**we're stronger together**