

Sermon Title: The Scars We Keep: Healing & Repairing
Scripture Reading: Luke 17:3-6

Growing in **forgiveness**—giving, receiving, & walking in it.

Conceptual Ideas:

So watch yourselves. “If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. ⁴Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.”

Luke 17:3-4

Whether we have been done wrong or have done wrong, it’s our responsibility to take initiative.

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, **live at peace with everyone.**

Romans 12:18

Pursuing relational health is the ongoing practice of healthy & growing people.

So watch yourselves.

v3a

“Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly **so you will not share in their guilt.**

Leviticus 19:17

Giving forgiveness is a profound act of self-care.

Humbling:

“If your brother or sister **sins against you, rebuke them;** and if they repent, forgive them. ⁴Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ **you must forgive them.**”

v3-4

Hard:

Even if they sin against you **seven times in a day and seven times** come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.” ⁵The apostles said to the Lord, **“Increase our faith!”**

v4-5

High call:

“If your brother or sister

v3

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Matthew 5:9

But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven.
Matthew 5:44-45

Every **“I forgive you”** or **“I repent”** is a statement of Jesus’s love & invitation to receive it.

Concrete **Tactics**:

For the person *giving forgiveness*:

“If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. ⁴ Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.”

v3-4

Prepare your heart to **give forgiveness**—remembering God’s mercy & your blind spots.

Preparing our hearts to forgive is **more advantageous** than waiting for an apology.

“If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. ⁴ Even if they sin against you seven times **in a day** and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.”

v3-4

Prepare yourself to be **a wounded healer**.

“Through compassion it is possible to recognize that the craving for love that people feel resides also in our own hearts, that the cruelty the world knows all too well is also rooted in our own impulses. Through compassion we also sense our hope for forgiveness in our friends’ eyes and our hatred in their bitter mouths. When they kill, we know that we could have done it; when they give life, we know that we can do the same. For a compassionate person nothing human is alien: no joy and no sorrow, no way of living and no way of dying.”

— Henri J.M. Nouwen, *The Wounded Healer*

“If your brother or sister sins against you, **rebuke them**;

v3

Create the space & set a time **for a conversation**.

“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. ¹⁶ But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ ¹⁷ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or 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 that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.’”

Matthew 18:15-20

“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.

v15

Approach people & the issue personally, privately, & tactfully.

But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’

v16

A witness is not someone who sees it as I see it; a witness is willing to see it from all sides & as it is.

If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

The end doesn’t change, but the means do.

“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 that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.²⁰ For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

There’s power in agreement & presence among the people of God in fulfilling the purposes of God.

For the person receiving forgiveness:

Prepare your heart to receive forgiveness—remembering God’s mercy & your blind spots.

Therefore, there is now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus,
Romans 8:1

Create the space & set a time for a conversation.

“If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and **if they repent**, forgive them.⁴ Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘**I repent**,’ you must forgive them.”

v3-4

Repentance involves acknowledgement & ownership: “You’re right—I did it.”

Repentance involves contrition & confession: “I’m sad it happened—I’m sorry I did it.”

Repentance involves **turning from & turning towards**: “I know this is what I did—Here’s what I’m doing now and moving forward.”

Repentance is an **act of faith & the first step of freedom**: “I’m taking certain steps even with uncertainty—controlling what I can and open handed with what I can’t.”

For everyone walking in forgiveness:

“If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. ⁴Even if they sin against **you seven times in a day and seven times** come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them.”

v3-4

Fight the false choice between forgiving & trusting.

Stay in the love of God.

“I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.
Jeremiah 31:3