

Beauty

Week of March 13

Most of us know the Golden Rule, but do we practice it? It's hard in day-to-day life—when things aren't going our way, when the kids have gotten on our last nerve, when our spouse is out gallivanting and we're holding down the fort—to “do to others whatever you would like them to do to you.” Often when we are stressed in one area we take it out on third parties, like folks at the grocery store, in traffic, or at work. And yet, Jesus says treat others *always* the way you want to be treated. He goes on to say: This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets” (Matthew 7:12).

Les Parrott has said that if married couples could possess this one thing, allow this one concept into their lives on a daily basis, like a good medicine it would change their marriage. In fact, he told those of us gathered at Fight Night, “I wish I could bottle it!” The one word is “Empathy”. What is it like to walk in his shoes or her shoes? What is it like to carry the burdens—mentally, physically, emotionally, relationally—that she carries on a moment-to-moment basis? What is it like to deal with the stress he has in making the decisions that affect the family, the workplace, the community, perhaps the church if he is a pastor or leader in the church?

Read Matthew 7:1-12

1. How did this weekend's Plain Truth speak to you: “Think bigger before you pull the trigger”?

Think about something you have said before that you later wished you could have taken back. What does the following Scripture say about being angry, cursing someone, or even calling them a name?

Read Matthew 5:21-22.

Again, the words you just read are Jesus' words from the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus who is King of kings and Lord of Lord knows that judgment is ahead for those who refuse to repent of sin. He also said “if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive you sins” (Matthew 6:15). It is a serious thing to harbor hatred and an unforgiving spirit toward another person, be it spouse, friend, or fellow Christian.

2. Colossians 3:14-15 says, “Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.” Our convictions of truth do not give us the right to dehumanize another person! How is it possible to stand for what you believe, perhaps even confront someone regarding your convictions, but to do so without condemning them?

Emotions are fickle, and unbridled emotion can be dangerous. It is scary what we humans are capable of apart from the restraining work of the Holy Spirit in our lives or in the world. Anger, rage, deep-seeded bitterness must be uprooted at the core. Are we able to “will” ourselves out of spiraling emotions? Yes, there are proactive things we can do, although it's often easier said than done. But for certain we know that Jesus defeated sin and all ugliness on the cross, and He has the power to help us if we will humble ourselves and absolutely surrender to Him. The Lord calls us to live by faith not fear, to be sustained by eternal truth not emotion.

3. What are some proactive tools to use when dealing with raw anger and emotion? (List some in the space below and share with your Life Group)

Why is it important not to suppress or repress our feelings?

Sadly, the enemy wants to keep you believing there is no way out of your circumstance—so you might as well give up. Depression is something you'll just have to live with. This temper is here to stay. You've blown up before you'll blow up again. But Christ speaks something totally different to you today. He says, “Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7). Now be honest, are you asking for deliverance on a regular basis? Are you seeking truth and freedom with all your heart? Are you knocking with fervor and persistence? If so Jesus promises that you will have what you desire.

4. Re-read carefully **Matthew 7:8** – what do you hear Jesus telling you personally?

5. In closing, think about how you would like to be treated in your marriage, your family, your workplace, in culture, in society. In the space below write what comes to mind:

How would your day-to-day life be different if you were to go and do likewise? In other words, what would be different about you if instead of focusing on yourself, you began to show empathy and treat others the way you want to be treated?

BEAUTY

Text: Matthew 7: 1-12

The Plain Truth:

Think _____ before you pull the _____.

- a) Right _____ never give you the right to _____ another person!
- b) Confront with _____ and do not _____.
- c) Remember unbridled _____ causes negative _____.
- c) Think of how you would like to be _____ and do likewise.

One Year Bible Reading

Mar. 13: Numbers 19:1-20:29, Luke 1:1-25, Psalm 56:1-13, Proverbs 11:8
Mar. 14: Numbers 21:1-22:20, Luke 1:26-56, Psalm 57:1-11, Proverbs 11:9-11
Mar. 15: Numbers 22:21-23:30, Luke 1:57-80, Psalm 58:1-11, Proverbs 11:12-13
Mar. 16: Numbers 24:1-25:18, Luke 2:1-35, Psalm 59:1-17, Proverbs 11:14
Mar. 17: Numbers 26:1-51, Luke 2:36-52, Psalm 60:1-12, Proverbs 11:15
Mar. 18: Numbers 26:52-28:15, Luke 3:1-22, Psalm 61:1-8, Proverbs 11:16-17
Mar. 19: Numbers 28:16-29:40, Luke 3:23-38, Psalm 62:1-12, Proverbs 11:18-19

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