

**Christ Community Covenant Church**  
**Intimacy According to God: "Deep Healing"**  
**Pastor Dave Scherrer - October 23, 2016**

Spiritual Discipline: Spiritual Director

Introduction to intimacy series

Tomorrow night the second of our follow up Bible hours looking at sins of intimacy that is impacting our culture.

Brokenness: the universal human condition Intimacy: the universal human longing
--

Brokenness makes us cry for 'mercy' doesn't it. Usually when we are defeated, when the enemy has broken through then we cry for mercy. And we have lots of enemies we can blame; the school system, the injustices of my career, my in laws, my upbringing, the social system.

But what if the enemy is me? What if I am the cause of my own brokenness and this terrible loneliness I feel is my fault? What if it comes to me that I will never feel the intimacy I have only dreamed of? I still need to cry mercy. Only God can save me from me. Only God can take these broken pieces and make something of it. Do you remember the cry of the broken man beating his chest – "Have mercy on me a sinner." Henri Nouwen writes;

*"Our life is full of brokenness - broken relationships, broken promises, broken expectations. How can we live with that brokenness without becoming bitter and resentful except by returning again and again to God's faithful presence in our lives."*

I still need to cry "Mercy, Forgive me" but too often pride stops us from mouthing the words . . . Henri Nouwen also writes:

"This cry for mercy is possible only when we are willing to confess that somehow, somewhere, we ourselves have something to do with our losses. Crying for mercy is a recognition that blaming God, the world, or others for our losses does not do full justice to the truth of who we are. We must acknowledge our own role in our brokenness. The prayer for God's mercy comes from a heart that knows that this human brokenness is not a fatal condition of which we have become the sad victims, but the bitter fruit of the human choice to say "No" to love." ~ *Henri J.M. Nouwen, With Burning Hearts*

It seems counter intuitive - How can we say no to love when at the core of every human is the need know and to be known . . . to love and to be loved? The human condition is longing to be enveloped in the warmth of an intimate embrace and we are like that broken vase that can hold an ounce. We are in need of the deep healing of our souls that is promised in Christ. And at the center of that healing is to restore trust. We have lost the loving feeling not because there is no longer a need for love, but because the hurts of love, the betrayals of love have left us bleached of trust. We are afraid to trust again for fear of being disappointed again. So much begins and begins again with trust. So this morning, remember this phrase: **Trust is earned** - always, always, **trust is earned**.

<b>Trust is earned</b>
------------------------

<b>Hebrews 3:13</b>
---------------------

But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
--

<b>'Trust' graph</b>
----------------------

“Trust always operates in the present tense. Hope looks toward the future. Trust looks to the present. Hope expects. Trust possesses. Trust receives what prayer acquires. So, what prayer needs, at all times, is abiding and abundant trust.” ~ *E.M. Bounds*

The Platform of Grace is built on repentance and a disciplined resolve to keep that trust! Of course the relationship can never be made whole if forgiveness and grace is never part of the equation. It has been said to err is human and to forgive is divine. I believe that.

### **Forgiveness is divine**

In fact Jesus has strong words of instruction regarding those of us who have been hurt. ***For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*** Matthew 6:14-15

Just as it is important to humble ourselves and admit when we are wrong, it is important to ask for forgiveness. When you ask forgiveness the forgiving party forfeits their right to ever bring it up again. We can choose to remember the transgressions no more, just as the Lord does (Isaiah 43:25-26). The same holds true when you grant forgiveness to another, put it behind you and let the deep healing of God sooth you and comfort and strengthen you. Without forgiveness the restoration of intimacy is impossible.

### **Ephesians 4:31-32**

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

“We win by tenderness. We conquer by forgiveness.” ~ *Frederick W. Robertson*

If you dare, ask the one who has hurt you “Do you feel forgiven?” and perhaps then say with all the love and grace you have, “You are forgiven and I love you.” You see if we have an agenda, if we have impure motive, we may try to exact our pound of flesh and as in the Merchant of Venice where we source that quote, we may only be satisfied when we have it straight from their heart. That is wrong. We must check our motives. Motives are critical!

### **Motives are critical**

One of my good friends in this congregation has said “Divorce is off the table. Tell them you are committed to restoring the relationship and keeping it healthy. Ask them if they are willing to do the same. Commitment to the relationship is the first step to restoration and all parties in the relationship must be committed to it.

### **Philippians 2:3**

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

### **Matthew 6:1**

“Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

### **1 Timothy 1:5**

The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

David prayed “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” And Jesus said “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God”.

**1. Be Honest:** Speak the truth in love and remember shouting does not make it true.

***When we use the truth to hurt or get even or to shame or to even the score, our motive is revenge.***  
Let me say that again. When we use the truth to hurt or to get even or to shame or to even the score . . . our motive is revenge.

**2. Keep Current:** Resolve your issues today and once they are resolved do not bring them back up tomorrow.

The simple truth of the Word of God says “do not let the sun go down while you are still angry” (Ephesians 4:26). This is so profoundly elementary that we often miss it. Seeds of irritations and annoyances, not dealt with on a daily basis, grow in our hearts. When they are not dealt with as soon as we recognize them, they take root. Each subsequent encounter with that same irritation, which will always be linked to some person, will cause that root to dig just a little deeper. The deeper it goes the more bitter it gets.

Scripture tells us “a root of bitterness springs up and defiles many” (Hebrews 12:15). When it finally spills out it hurts those around. Proverbs 4:23 tells us “above all else guard your heart for it is the well spring of life”. It is the very source of all we are. Guard your heart. Take stock every day. Keep short accounts for your own heart’s sake. If the root is only just beginning in your own heart and still undetected by others, go to God and ask for its removal. You know when it’s there. Ask for grace to be poured out in your heart so that you will have all the grace you need to deal with that particular situation and person.

**3. Attack the problem, not the person:** Avoid absolutes like “always”, “never”, “ever”.

**Seek first to understand.** Before you confront or criticize, make sure you understand the situation. Your assumption may not be accurate. Take the time to understand as best you can.

**Keep your emotions out of it.** If you have strong emotion attached to the situation you’re probably in judgment of the other person. If your issues are triggered, it will likely obscure or distort the communication.

**Avoid sarcasm.** Leave this technique to TV sitcoms. It has no place when telling the truth with compassion. It just fuels anger and frustration. I am not a fan of sarcasm most any time.

**4. Act, Don’t React:** It is so easy to respond in an ungodly way when we are in the heat of discussion.

Pick the right time. Right as your spouse comes in the door is perhaps not the best. You have been thinking about this all day and so you of course want to get after it. A little food and some rest from the stress of the day will help to set the atmosphere for caring conversation. Remember, ***when we use the truth to hurt or get even or to shame or to even the score, our motive is revenge.***

Again, it seems so crazy. The one thing we long for is intimacy and we forget that intimacy is spelled L-O-V-E. Love as an act of our will not as an emotional overflow. Love that comes from my chooser not my feeler. Love is everything.

**Love is everything!**

### **1 Corinthians 13:1-3**

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.  
<sup>2</sup> And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Check your motives – is it to heal or to wound, is it to get even or to find the win-win, is it to be understood or to understand.

**1 Peter 4:8**

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

**1 Corinthians 13:4-7**

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.