

In the message, Pastor Kory talked about the 2006 Amish school shooting and said, *“In order for the Amish community to respond the way they did, they didn’t have to gather the leaders together and strategize about how they were gonna respond to the situation. There was never a question because forgiveness was not just something they did, it’s who they are. Every day, they sow the seeds of selflessness, peace, and reconciliation, so when the time came for them to respond to the greatest evil you can imagine, they didn’t have to fight their nature to forgive. Forgiveness is their nature. That’s Gelassenheit—let-go-ness.”*

8. If it had been your children, how do you think you would have responded?
9. How do you feel about the way the Amish community responded?
10. How did Pastor Kory say we can develop that life of forgiveness?
11. Would you say you trust that God is just and will defend you?

Application:

12. Is there someone you have bitter feelings toward?
 - At home? (spouse, parent, child, etc.)
 - At work? (boss, co-worker)
 - Church?
 - Someone from your past?
13. What will it take for you to be able to forgive them? What would that look like?
14. Would you try to talk to them?
15. How would forgiveness change your life?



Growing Thornbushes

Sermon Notes and Takehome

December 5th, 2010

Review:

- We are responsible for our spiritual depth.
- The Word of God can reach us anywhere.
- Cultivating soft soil takes _____.
- The fruit of a deep life is _____.

Everywhere we look, people are growing _____.

- They are about self-_____.
- The sins of _____ and _____ are direct challenges to the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 5:21-22:

“Unless your righteousness _____ that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law, you certainly won’t enter the Kingdom of Heaven.” (vs. 20)

The law says, “Do not _____.”

Jesus mentions three escalating levels of anger:

1. Acting out in _____.
 - ✓ Anger begins with _____ - _____.
 - ✓ It a natural _____ response.

When we're mature, we can ask ourselves:

- ✓ Why am I angry?
- ✓ Do I have the right to be angry?
- ✓ How do I deal with it in a healthy, Christ-like way?

2. _____ (or _____) is worse than anger.

- It's _____.
- It denies a person's _____.

We reap what we sow (Galatians 6:8-9)

3. _____. (vs 22)

- The Greek word for "fool" is *moros*.
- When you call someone *moros*, you are consigning them to _____.
- Jesus turns it around and says those with this attitude are themselves in danger of _____.

Jesus says acting out in anger, holding contempt, and damnation make us just as _____ as the one who hurts us.

"Gelassenheit"—the attitude of "let go-ness."

Two things that allow me to forgive totally:

1. *Gelassenheit* requires a deep sense of trust that God knows what it _____ and _____ and will defend me.
2. The _____ of Jesus and the power of the _____.

Questions for Study and Reflection:

1. Read the following passages. What do they say tell us about anger in its many forms?

- Proverbs 15:1
- Proverbs 30:33
- Ephesians 4:25-32
- Hebrew 12:14-15
- James 1:19-20

2. Why do you think it's so hard for us to forgive?

Tim Keller says, "The fastest way to become like Satan is to try to be God. The fastest way to become godly is to refuse to be God."

3. How do you think this is true?

4. How does anger, bitterness, and damnation put us in God's seat?

5. What do you think about the statement: "Only God has the ability to judge someone without becoming evil Himself."

6. Can you think of a time when you acted out in anger? What did your "acting out" accomplish? Was it productive?

7. Can you think of a time when you held on to bitterness toward someone? What was the result? If you were able to forgive, how were you able to do so? How did you feel when you forgave them?