FORGIVING OUR VICTIMS
Matthew 5:20-26

"If thou... rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee... first be reconciled." This is not a call to forgive and be reconciled to one who has injured me. That is of course a necessity if I am to be a Christian. It is rather a command that I do what is often even more difficult, forgive the one whom I have injured. In fact, there is no one that I can hate more bitterly than the man I have wronged, provided I am not willing to right that wrong. This is the case because if I refuse to apologize, I must give myself a reason for my wrong course. In so doing I tell myself, not that I am cruel and unjust, but that my victim got no more than was coming to him. Thus I can talk myself into hating the most innocent.

Give us grace, O Lord, to forgive, not only those who have wronged us, but even those whom we ourselves have wronged. Amen.
FACING TOMORROW
Matthew 5:25-34

"Take no thought for the morrow." What does Jesus mean? He is not warning against the thought-out life. He is not forbidding us to look ahead. If ever any man had an eye for the future, that man was Jesus. It was because He was forward-looking that he dared to endure the Cross. "For the joy that was set before Him, he endured the Cross despising the shame." But while Jesus looked ahead, He did so in faith and confidence. His trust in God made it possible for Him to face tomorrow without fear.

Dear Lord and Father of mankind forgive our foolish ways; and reclothe us in our rightful mind. Amen
"When Jesus heard it He marveled." It was not easy to take Jesus by surprise. But this Roman soldier did just that. He astonished the Master by the strength and beauty of his faith as certain favored Jews astonished Him by their unbelief. This centurion had come to Jesus with a prayer upon his lips. He was not praying for himself but for his slave. When Jesus responded by saying, "I will come and heal," this amazing soldier said: "That will not be necessary. I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof, nor is such coming needful. Speak the word only and my servant shall be healed." It was when Jesus heard that that He marveled and said: "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith no not in Israel." What a compliment!

We thank Thee, O Lord, for this man who had so little of opportunity and yet made so much of it. Save us from making little out of our opportunities that are so great.

Amen.
"So they turned against Him." Who were those that turned against the Master? They were people of His own village, those who had known Him since boyhood. Why did they turn against Him? It was not because they found Jesus lacking in wisdom. His wisdom they acknowledged. It was not because they discovered that He had no power; they confessed both His wisdom and power as they asked, "Where did He obtain such wisdom, and these wondrous powers?" Their rejection was born at least in part of their own self-contempt. They knew both Joseph and Mary. They knew Jesus' brothers and sisters. They said to themselves, "Nobody that such a poor creature as I am knows, can be of any real worth."

We pray Thee, O Lord, to save us from that self-contempt that breeds contempt for others. Give us to think grandly of ourselves as Thy children that we may think grandly of others for Thy sake. Amen.
THEY TURNED AGAINST HIM
Matthew 13:53-58 (Weymouth)

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THE VOICE OF UNBELIEF
Matthew 15:13-21 (Weymouth)

"The best of the day is now gone." These disciples were quite sure that the Master was about to make a mess of things. They felt that they must take matters into their own hands in order to save the situation. Therefore, they came saying, "The best of the day is now done." But Jesus showed them that such was not the case. He knew that the best was yet to be. That is always the case if we walk in His fellowship. It is true of the youth in life's green spring. It is equally true for the old body who is doing the soilsome journey of the last mile. For the old age that is deadly is never a matter of lost youthfulness of body, but lost youthfulness of heart.

We thank Thee, O God, that we never have to set our faces mournfully toward the past. Grant us the grace to forget the things that are behind as we press toward the mark for the prize. Amen.
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Matthew 15: 13-21
(Weymouth)

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Amen.
HELPERS AND HINDERERS

Matthew 27:45-50 "One of them ran... while the rest said, "Stay". Matthew 27:49

This handful of soldiers clustered about these three crosses hear the same cry from the lips of Jesus. None of them understands what the sufferer is saying. But they all realize that it is a cry of agony. That cry at once divides them into two groups. One of them, a heroic minority, at once goes into action. There is little he can do, but he does his best.

The majority do nothing. Not only so, but they seek to hinder their companion. "Stay", they say. These two groups are with us still. In every community, in every church, in many homes, there are those who help and those who hinder.

We thank thee, our Father, that we may be workers together with thee. We praise thee that the weakest of us may be among those who lift and help and bless.
GETTING PERSONAL
Matthew 33:46
(Weymouth)

"After listening to His parables, the high priest and the Pharisees perceived that He was speaking about them." Good! There is some hope when the listener or the reader realizes that the message is personal. As long as we listen only to apply the truth to some of our wayward friends, it will minister to our pride and self-sufficiency rather than to our repentance and growth in grace. Today God singles you and me out from all others to speak to us a personal word. This He is doing for every human soul.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou dost speak to us as individuals. Give us the wisdom, whether Thy message comes as a rebuke or promise, to perceive that Thou art speaking to us.

Amen.
GETTING PERSONAL
Matthew 3:46 (Weymouth)

"After listening to His parables, the high priest and the Pharisees perceived that He was speaking about them." Good! There is some hope when the listener or the reader realizes that the message is personal. As long as we listen only to apply the truth to some of our wayward friends, it will minister to our pride and self-sufficiency rather than to our repentance and growth in grace. Today God singles you and me out from all others to speak to us a personal world. This He is doing for every human soul.

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