Diving Deeper into Discipleship

April 11, 2021 | Pastor Pete Fowler

Open Invitation: Mercy is Strength

Sermon Reflection Questions:

- Where do you see the problem of "toxic adversariality" in the world around you? Are you caught up in the midst of it?
- If you were to make a list of people you consider your enemies, or God's enemies, what names would be on that list? How might you actively and intentionally love the people on that list?
- Pray that the Holy Spirit would soften our hardened hearts toward our enemies and use us to awaken the consciences of those who oppose us.
- Thank God for "demonstrating" His love for us on the cross of Christ while we were His enemies, stuck in our self-centered sinfulness!

Devotional Reading and Reflection

- **John 13:34-35** | What does Jesus communicate here about how people will identify His disciples? How are Christians today doing in fulfilling this “new command?”
- **Acts 9:1-19** | Can you relate to the hesitation we see in Ananias in this passage (v. 13-14)? What does the Lord’s response (v. 15-16) teach us?
- **Romans 12:9-21** | Looking at the verses about loving our enemies in this broader context, what additional insights can we gather that might be helpful?

Self-Care Discipline

April Discipline: True Service | Rewards & Results (*Celebration of Discipline, p.128*)

- If true service is to be understood and practiced, it must be distinguished clearly from “self-righteous service.” This month, we will look at several of these differences. Pray that God would allow you to find opportunities for “true service” in your life.
- Self-righteous service requires external rewards. It needs to know that people see and appreciate the effort. It seeks human applause. True service rests content in hiddenness. It does not fear the lights and blare of attention, but it does not seek them either. Since it is living out of a new Center of reference, the divine nod of approval is completely sufficient.
- Self-righteous service is highly concerned about results. It eagerly awaits if the person served will reciprocate in kind. It becomes bitter when the results fall below expectations. True service is free of the need to calculate results. It delights only in the service. It can serve enemies as freely as friends.

Notes