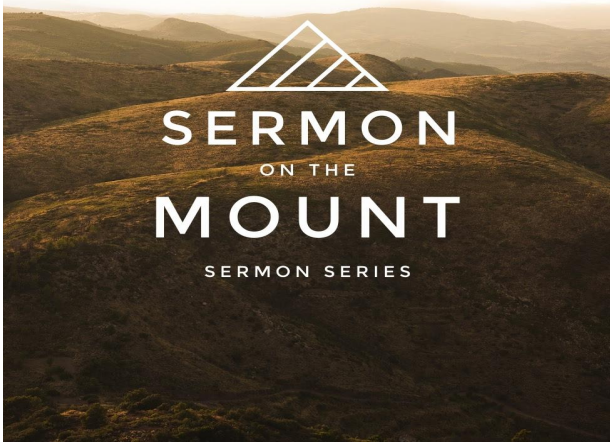


SERMON ON THE MOUNT: RECONCILIATION

February 12, 2023

Preaching: Michael Swartzentruber, Senior Minister



MATTHEW 5:21-26

21 'You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, "You shall not murder"; and "whoever murders shall be liable to judgment." 22 But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, "You fool", you will be liable to the hell of fire. 23 So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. 26 Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?

If the language of Jesus seems extreme, it's meant to be. It is hyperbole to get a point across (you can't really leave an offering half-complete on the altar). The Kingdom of God is not just about the big violence (murder), it extends to the little violence (hostility and hurt) of everyday life.

2. Think back on a time when you knew unresolved anger or conflict existed with someone—a family member, colleague, or friend. What did you do? How did you work toward reconciliation, if at all, or did you do something else?
3. We live in a world of hollow apologies (crafted by Public Relations teams). Reflect on a time when you experienced a meaningful apology—what happened? Why did it matter?
4. If reconciliation had "steps," what do you think they would be? Steps might include: cooling down, apologies or repair words, amends, and commitments for future change.
5. Is there a difference between forgiveness and reconciliation?

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