

Weak>Strong
Judging Jesus, Pt. 3

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I. PRAYER

- i. Would you help us to fully comprehend the depths of your love for us in Christ so that we can love each other and our neighbors in the same way.

II. INTRODUCTION

a. I'll never forget this one time when I was an Associate Pastor at Sojourn Church in Fairfax, VA.

- i. We were having a worship service and our Lead Pastor, Justin, was up front giving the benediction.
 - Which is a way you dismiss the service.
 1. So, it was the very end.
 - And as Justin was about to dismiss everyone, this woman stood up and interrupted the service.
 1. This was a homeless woman and it was her first time at the church.
 - She comes up front and she says, I NEED PRAYER!
 1. And Justin, a little thrown off guard...what?
 2. I NEED PRAYER!
- ii. **Now, I am in the back of the room observing what is happening.**
 - And I start to get, internally, agitated.
 - I'm thinking to myself:
 1. What is this woman doing?
 2. The nerve for this woman to ask for prayer in the middle of a church service!
 3. This is out of line!



iii. Of course, Justin handled it beautifully.

- He very compassionately listened to what the woman needed prayer for and prayed for her.
- She then sat down, he gave the benediction, dismissed the service, and all was well.

b. You know maybe that's the hang up that many people have with the church.

i. People like me...several years ago.

- That's a great example right? It seems like the church cares more about the order of things more than about people.
- It can seem like the church cares more about our behavior than they do our brokenness and pain.
- It can seem like the church cares more about their appearance than they care about the reality.

ii. In that moment, years ago, my heart cared more for the appearance of our service than this woman who needed prayer.

- And you know what that communicates:
 1. The church is for people who have it together.
 2. The church is for people who are not messy.
 3. Be sure to clean yourself up before you come here...or at least stuff it all in, put a smile on your face, and pretend everything is okay.
 4. Because at the church, it's more important to appear strong than weak.



- That day I was in sin...and needed to repent.
- iii. It's so sad how it is so easy for the church to become a place where we feel we need to impress the people around us rather than the church being a place where we feel safe and comfortable letting people see our weaknesses and failures.
- Don't come here and burden us with your marriage problems!
 - Don't come here and talk about your addiction to pornography or the co-worker you fantasize about...that's messy stuff that we don't want to deal with.
 - Don't come here and burden us with your struggle with depression or anxiety...that's too complicated.
 - Don't come here and reveal your financial problems and your debt.
 - Don't come here if you're homeless, and you haven't had the luxury of a shower and clean clothes...that makes us uncomfortable.
 - Don't come here and mess with the church experience that I expect to have!
- iv. You know, these are things we never say out loud, but they can be in our heart.
- And all of us have deep wounds and struggles that we keep hidden and our greatest fear is that this is what the people at church are thinking.
- v. It is very easy to establish some unwritten rules in the church where we say we don't want to deal with mess, we don't want to be confronted



in our own mess, let's just all smile and no one mess with the status quo.

III. JUDGING JESUS

a. This is the third part of our sermon series called Judging Jesus.

- i. And this series is designed to give you some truth about Jesus Christ so that if you decide to reject him or accept him, that you are judging the God of the Bible and not a misconstrued version of God.
 - If you missed the first two sermons in this series, you can listen to them at gracehillchurch.com.

b. This morning, my goal is to show us that Jesus Christ came for the weak and not for the strong.

- i. My heart, in that story that I shared earlier, was not aligned with Jesus Christ.
- ii. Jesus Christ came for those whose life is a mess.
- iii. And the church should be the place, Grace Hill Church should be a place, where we can be open about our mess and weaknesses and be loved and cared for.

IV. LUKE 13:10-17

a. Let me show you an example from the life of Jesus.

- i. Turn to Luke 13.
 - Gospel = Eyewitness account of Jesus.



- In v.10-17, I think we will see a perfect example of the heart of Jesus and some important applications for us as a church.

ii. Read Luke 13:10-17.

b. As we look at this historical account of Jesus Christ, I want you to see three things Jesus does: (1) Calls Her, (3) Frees Her, & (4) Defends Her.

i. Calls Her

- Jesus is teaching in the Synagogue, the woman walks in and as soon as Jesus sees her, he calls her to himself.
 1. Jesus is in the middle of teaching.
 2. There was a large gathering in front of him.
 3. But Jesus' compassion for this woman trumped all of that other stuff.
 4. There would be time to teach the Scriptures in the Synagogue later, for right now, this woman and her suffering is what mattered.
- If you've entrusted your life to Jesus, you know what that feels like.
 1. You know what it feels like to be a mess, to be enslaved by sin, to think that the God of the universe would have every right to overlook you.
 2. But instead, he zeroes in on you, and calls you.
 3. The God of the Universe saw you...in every bit of your weakness and failures.
 4. Psalm 139 tells us that God knows our thoughts and what is on our tongue before we even say it.



5. When God called you, he did it knowing every bit of your junk and mess...and it didn't stop him.
- I believe that there are people here today and God is zeroing in on you. He is calling you.
 1. I know there are people here today and Grace Hill Church is the first church that you've interacted with ever or at least in a long time.
 2. This is the first time you've really begun to think about the things of God.
 3. And I believe that that is God calling you because he wants to free you!
- ii. **And that's what we see Jesus do for this woman...he frees her.**
- This woman had this condition for 18 years! She was in bondage and there probably was no earthly cure or remedy for her condition.
 1. Especially if this was some sort of spiritual oppression occurring.
 - Only Jesus Christ has the ability to free this woman from her condition.
 1. So, he calls her and he frees her.
 2. That's amazing right?
 3. This woman walks into a building that is designated for the worship of God and she gets healed.
 4. Shouldn't everyone rejoice?!?!?
 - The Synagogue Ruler...he's frustrated...he's agitated...he's indignant.
 1. What is this guy doing? We don't free people from their bondage on the Sabbath day!
 2. This is a place of law and order.



- Isn't it interesting that for Jesus, the liturgy of the synagogue can wait so he can have compassion on this woman...and to the ruler of the synagogue...compassion for this woman can wait...so we can give priority to the liturgy.
 1. And that's the difference!
 2. Religion says that you need to get your religion in order for you to be free from your sins.
 3. Jesus says: I will free you from your sins so that you can live your life following and worshiping me.
 4. When Jesus called you, you were a mess. When Jesus called me, I was a mess!
 5. When Jesus called you, you were weak like this woman, you were not strong like this synagogue ruler.
 6. Jesus says in Mark 2:17 - "...Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."
- When you were defined by your sin, Jesus called you and freed you by giving of his own life on the cross so that you could be forgiven of your sin and given new life.
 1. He freed you from your bondage.
- And if you are one of those whom Jesus is calling today, will you accept the freedom that he is offering?
 1. Because sometimes, it can be a hard step for us to make that commitment to Christ when we hear his voice because we feel like we have not done enough or learned enough to be worthy of starting a relationship with Jesus.



2. And here is what you need to know...you aren't worthy!
3. But Jesus wants to free you first, then grow you into a follower of Christ.
4. Do you hear his voice calling you?
5. Will you let him free you?

iii. **We also see that after this woman is freed of her bondage, Jesus defends her.**

- Let's read our text again starting at v.14.
- So, the Synagogue Ruler is upset because Jesus performed a work on the Sabbath Day.
 1. But Jesus immediately rebuttals the Synagogue Ruler by pointing out his hypocrisy.
 2. (Actually, the way the text reads, Jesus is pointing out the hypocrisy of the Synagogue Ruler and all of the people that are agreeing with the Synagogue Ruler in their minds...Jesus knows their thoughts.)
 3. But, during the life of Jesus, Rabbinical Judaism was present and they had created for themselves all kinds of additional regulations to the law found in the Old Testament...and these regulations were written in works like the Mishnah.
 4. And the Mishnah says that it is appropriate to do some work on the Sabbath in order to take care of your animals.
 5. And Jesus is like...HOLD UP.



6. Are you saying that you can relieve your donkey from the bondage of thirst but you have no room in all of your regulations to relieve this woman of her bondage of 18 years?!?
 7. Sit Down.
 8. We don't hear again from the Synagogue Ruler...and the people rejoiced and glorified God.
- But I want to turn your attention to something specific Jesus did in defending this woman....Jesus makes it very clear to these hypocrites who this woman belongs to.
 1. Look at v.16 – This woman is a daughter of Abraham.
 2. This woman is a member of God's Covenant Community...that is her identity.
 3. And we don't have time to unpack all of the theology, but the Word of God tells us that as followers of Jesus Christ, we are literally children of God...we have been grafted in to the covenant that God established with Abraham back in Genesis 12.
 4. Because Jesus united our life with his life when we trust in Him, we literally become in the line of Abraham...a member of God's covenant community.
 5. Galatians 3:26 – “for in Christ Jesus you are all sons and daughters of God, through faith.”
 6. Galatians 3:28 – “And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.”



7. As a follower of Jesus, God has made a covenant with you that he will never leave you, that he will never forsake you, that you will inherit his kingdom...no matter how bad you mess up, no matter how much you struggle...you belong to Him.
 - Listen, Christian, you don't remain in right standing with God because you earn it day after day...
 1. You stay in right standing with God because of your identity.
 2. You are His.
 3. You are a son/daughter of God.
- iv. **So, in this moment in the synagogue, we see Jesus call this woman, free her, and defend her.**
- And that is what God has done for us in Christ.
 1. He has called us to himself, freed us from our bondage to sin, and he defends us and keeps us because we are now his.
 - We are not strong, we are weak.
 - God is our strength. Amen?

V. APPLICATION

- a. **So, this is what I want us to think about for the remainder of our time...this is what God has done for us. This is how God has loved us. In our weakness, not in our strength.**
 - i. Here it is: This is how God calls the church to love others.



b. Our love for one another and for our neighbor should mirror how Christ has loved us.

- i. And Christ has loved us with full knowledge of our weaknesses, our failures, and our mess.
 - What would it look like for Grace Hill Church to be a place where everyone can be fully known, all the good and all the bad, and yet everyone is fully loved, accepted, and cherished?
 - What would it look like for us to forsake the temptation to put on a façade, pretend everything is okay and start trusting each other to love one another in the same way that Christ has loved us?
 1. To humbly acknowledge that we are weak and stop pretending that we're strong.
 - What would it look like for Grace Hill Church to have a culture where we look past one's struggles, we look past one's appearance, and we see the identity and value of each person?
- ii. What would it have looked like if I had loved that woman who interrupted our church service all those years ago and not had been annoyed with her?

c. There are people all around us every single day and all around the world who are under bondage.

- i. They're under the bondage to sin as they have not trusted Christ.
 - They could be under bondage of poverty and can't escape.



- They could be under the bondage of an abusive spouse or family.
 - The bondage of illness or a disability.
 - They could be under the bondage of slavery as someone has taken them captive and are forcing labor or sex upon them.
- ii. **All of that happens here in our Town and across the world.**
- And the question that I have for us is what does it look like for the church to imitate the love of Jesus by moving towards these people despite their weakness, working towards their freedom, and defending them based on their identity as image bearers of God?

d. If you're in a marriage right now that is not going well, but you don't know how to get help or your ashamed to even admit it...

- i. I pray Grace Hill Church will be a place where you and all of your mess can be fully known...and yet you can be fully loved as we seek to point you to Jesus, the only place where you and your marriage will find true healing.

e. If you are in bondage to an addictive sin like pornography or a substance...

- i. I pray Grace Hill Church will be a place where you can be open about your struggle and weakness, where you can receive help in your addiction, and people will see you for who you are...a child of God...and not define you as the addict or the pervert.



f. If you don't know Jesus. And your still wrestling with what you believe about God.

- i. I pray Grace Hill Church is a place where you can openly wrestle with your questions and not feel inferior.
- ii. And that we will demonstrate to you the enormous grace that Jesus has on us.

g. I pray that if someone like Garnet showed up at this church, they would feel like they belong.

- i. Garnet is a man that some people in this church helped with some basic needs.
 - He's a single father with health issues of his own so he can't work.
 - His child is having a hard time in school.
 - And on top of being a victim of a shooting...his disability benefit is just not making needs meet.
- ii. I've been to Garnet's apartment, he doesn't have any furniture. The lights aren't on.
 - He doesn't have many of the basics that we all enjoy.
- iii. Would Garnet and all of his struggles be warmly welcomed into this community?
 - Would we see through his weakness and his struggle and see him for the man that he is?
 - Would we move towards him, seek to come along side of him in his struggle, and defend him as the image bearer of God that he is?



h. What about a family with a child that has severe special needs?

- i. What about middle and high schoolers here in Herndon who have parents that aren't present, they're working five jobs to make ends meet, and these kids are teetering on the edge of jumping with the gangs.
 - Will they be warmly welcomed and loved here?

i. Again, It is very easy to establish some unwritten rules in the church where we say we don't want to deal with mess, we don't want to be confronted in our own mess, let's just all smile and maintain the status quo.

- i. And the people who have especially difficult challenges or needs should probably go somewhere else because we don't want to sacrifice our church experience for them.
 - And as a brand new church here in Herndon, we have an opportunity to battle that culture being silently built here.
- ii. And it starts with recognizing that Jesus loved us, moved toward us, called us, freed us, defended us, despite our failures, struggles, and weaknesses.
 - He came for the weak and not for the strong.
 - So, Grace Hill Church must be for the weak and not for the strong.



VI. CONCLUSION

a. So, if you're here and you are still sorting out what you think about Jesus Christ...

- i. Before you make your judgment, you have to know that Jesus came for the weak and not for the righteous.
- ii. And he is calling you to trust in him.
 - To confess that you are weak. That you are a sinner that deserves his judgment.
 - But you trust in Jesus. That he took your place on the cross and gave you his righteous life so you could be reconciled to God.
- iii. Will you trust in him today?
 - You know next week, we are hoping to do baptisms if we can work it out logistically.
 - And if you've been on the edge when it comes to committing your life to Jesus, we would love to pray with you after the service for you to finally make that move and see you get baptized next week.
 1. Nothing would give this church more joy than that.
 2. So if that is you, come find me after this sermon as we end the service and let's pray together.

b. Grace Hill, our vision is to be a church where ALL PEOPLE can find joy in Jesus.

- i. ALL PEOPLE.
- ii. Let's pray right now that God would give us a supernatural compassion for the people that he puts in our path.

