



WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK 3

It was week 3 in our series *I Need Healing*. In Sunday's message we looked into Jesus' words leading up to what has been dubbed The Golden Rule (Do unto others as you would have them do unto you). You may have heard these words many times in many places. It's one of those phrases that sounds like it could have come from a number of ancient sources. But what Jesus said in Luke 6 was and is groundbreaking. It still goes against our human nature to go the extra mile and offer forgiveness. As you read, pray, and study this week, may you sit in the challenge of Jesus' invitation to live differently in the world.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: LUKE 6.26-31 (ESV)

"Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

²⁷ *"But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. ³¹ And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.*

- Once again, we read challenging words from Jesus. Our sense of right and wrong seems to be our deepest ethic. On each side of a conflict we feel that we hold the moral high ground to strike back. And often we do, but Jesus is pointing to a higher purpose and a different way. If you study each of these statements of Jesus, you will find that what he invites us into would actually heap shame on the person who has wronged us. **What prevents you from having the long-view in response to being wronged by someone else? What are the possible implications of Jesus' command?**

- *God, continue to challenge me with the teachings of Jesus. Don't let me water them down. Change my perspective and move me to treat others the way I would like to be treated. Amen.*

TUESDAY: LUKE 6.32-36 (ESV)

“If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount.³⁵ But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.³⁶ Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

- Jesus redefines love. For most of the world, love is based on what you can expect to get in return. “I will demonstrate love for you so long as it benefits me.” As the teaching continues, we see that Jesus’ kind of love isn’t necessarily a good financial investment. But your reward will be great.
What are the potential “great rewards” for loving your enemies?
- *Heavenly Father, I give you my heart. Please do the transforming work required for me to truly follow Jesus. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: GENESIS 4.8-12 (NIV)

Now Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.” While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

⁹ *Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?”*

“I don’t know,” he replied. “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

¹⁰ *The LORD said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground.¹¹ Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand.¹² When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth.”*

- In Sunday’s message, we heard about the Iron Rule. This concept is summarized by “Do what you are big enough to do” or, “Do what you can get away with” Cain was big and strong enough to attack and kill his brother Abel. He followed the Iron Rule. When confronted by God, Cain’s response revealed how detached he was from love. *Am I my brother’s keeper?* What a self-convicting statement! **In which situations are you tempted to ask Cain’s question? Where do you see the Iron Rule being lived out in global affairs today?**
- *God, I want to be able to answer you when you ask about my brother’s and sisters. I want to be my brother’s keeper. Amen.*

THURSDAY: LUKE 10.30-33 (NIV)

Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead.³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

- Also in Sunday's message we heard about the Silver Rule- "What you do not want done to you do not do to others." or "Don't do what you don't want done to you" In the case of the priest and the Levite in Jesus' parable, neither felt compelled to help the man beaten and left for dead-it wasn't their problem. They would have had to go out of their way to do what we as the audience see as the right thing. The Samaritan chose the path of love and we call him "good". **Have you ever benefited from a Good Samaritan's act of love? Have you ever been the Good Samaritan to someone else?**
- *God, open my eyes and guide me with your Spirit to truly see those who are in need of acts of love. Amen.*

FRIDAY: MATTHEW 7.9-12 (NIV)

Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone?¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?¹¹ If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!¹² So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you,

- Matthew records another setting of a similar teaching by Jesus. God's heart towards us is like the heart Jesus commands us to have for others. Our image of God can become distorted when we ourselves are not living out the Golden Rule and giving the best we have to those around us. **Do you ever think about how your treatment of others impacts how they see God's heart towards them? How can this become a daily practice for you?**
- *God, I want good things for those I love the most. Give me the grace to extend that love to everyone I meet. Amen.*

SATURDAY: PSALM 103.9-13 (NIV)

*He will not always accuse,
nor will he harbor his anger forever;
¹⁰ he does not treat us as our sins deserve
or repay us according to our iniquities.
¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;
¹² as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

¹³ As a father has compassion on his children,
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;*

- God's grace is evident to the Psalmist who may have gone through a period of sickness. While we might deserve the life resulting from our separation from God, God pursues us and shows compassion to us. Instead of sitting in that undeserved grace, Jesus calls us to extend it to others. **How are your daily actions a result of God's forgiveness of your sins?**
- *Lord, thank you for forgiving me of my sins and offering me new life in Jesus Christ. Embolden me to extend that grace to everyone I meet today. Amen.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

As a group, talk through some specific situations in which you could practice the Golden Rule from Luke 6.

- Think through a recent time when someone made you angry.
 - What would be the Iron Rule response to that situation?
 - What would be the Silver Rule response to the situation?
 - What would be the Golden Rule response?
 - How did you actually respond?