

The Extra Mile

Today's sermon stems from another request: "To what extent do you think Jesus would have gone to for the one and as Christians how far or to what extent do you go after and pursue the one. At what point do you just give up the pursuit? If all things are possible with God, then why do we give up or stop? How do we not lose hope when we don't see evidence of change or fruit?"

Many passages immediately came to my mind:

- Matthew 7:6. Don't throw your pearls to pigs.
- Luke 15. He leaves the 99 for the 1. The Pharisees and scribes didn't understand.
- Matthew 23:37-39. Your house is left desolate.
- Matthew 18:22/Luke 17:1-4 Yet, we must be patient and willing to forgive. After Jesus instructs on handling sin between your brother, Peter's takeaway isn't, "Okay, I warn him once, then twice, but three times and he's out!" No, he was willing to forgive him seven times! Yet, Jesus said "seventy-seven times," as stated in Matthew 18:22. Jesus goes on to encourage mercy. We all have a debt we cannot repay, yet the Lord has forgiven us.
- Matthew 10:12-14. Jesus taught to shake the dust off and move on.
- Luke 23:34. Wanting forgiveness for those killing Him.

And it's not Jesus alone. Those before and after Him had the same message.

- Luke 3:7-9. John expected them to bear fruits. We should expect people to bear fruit when they say they repent.
- 2 Corinthians 7:10. Paul said that godly grief and worldly grief are distinguishable by repentance.
- Titus 3:10. Seems quick and to the point.
- Jude 22-23. It's a case-by-case situation.

It seems that we're navigating the principles of repentance and forgiveness. This will require wisdom and patience.

- We know that Jesus warned those who would not obey. Yes, there's a point at which a branch is cut off. John 15:1-11
- Yet, we must be humble, patient, and willing to walk the extra mile. Matthew 5:38-48.
- As for losing hope - this is why we don't put our hope in people, but in God!