

Sermon 8-20-17 Healing from misunderstandings

Dear Healed by the Lord:

When you are misunderstood, you have no defense.

- No matter how hard you try to connect the misunderstanding, it usually gets worse
- You try to “set the record straight”
- The harder you work, the worse it gets and it hurts to be misunderstood

There was a lawyer who was a member of a law firm in Texas. The lawyer’s boss would give a turkey to each of his employees every year at Thanksgiving. Every year this lawyer would receive a turkey. One year, however, something happened that created a huge misunderstanding.

The lawyer single and lived alone.

- He had no use for this turkey
- He had no idea how to fix it
- So every year he would give his turkey away to some needy family

This particular year his close friends in the law office replaced the man’s turkey with one made of paper-mache. They weighted it with lead to make it feel like a real turkey and attached a real turkey neck and tail to make it look like a real turkey.

On the Wednesday before Thanksgiving everyone gathered in the boardroom to receive their turkey. The lawyer stepped up and picked up his bogus bird. Later that day he got on the bus and headed for home with his fake turkey. At one bus stop a rather run-down, discouraged looking man got on the bus and sat down next to the lawyer.

The lawyer struck up a conversation with the man. The man was looking for a job and had a large family. He told the lawyer he had no food for Thanksgiving Day.

The lawyer decided to give his turkey to this man but he thought this man had too much pride to receive a gift so I will offer this turkey to him for a few dollars.

The man took the offer gave the lawyer a couple of dollars and took the turkey. The man was overwhelmed with joy and told the lawyer --- God bless you. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving. I will never forget you.

Can you picture this man going home, announcing to his family “Hey, look at what I have.” Placing the turkey on the kitchen table and unwrapping it only to find this fake glob of paper and lead weights.

The next Monday the lawyer went to work and his friends asked him about the turkey. They were aghast to find out what had happened. The lawyer searched for the man everyday for a week looking to make amends but never found him.

When we are misunderstood there are usually two steps involved.

- No. 1 we commit an innocent act or speak an innocent word
- No. 2 an offense is created unknown to us

I remember the first sermon I gave in my first church in Jacksonville, Florida and the misunderstanding that arose between me and one of the members. She was walking out after worship and told me “I did not get anything out of your sermon today.” But that’s not what I heard. I thought she said “I really got a lot out of your sermon that day.” So I answered “That’s probably because you really listened.” But that’s not what she heard. She thought I had said: “That’s probably because you did not listen to it.”

That was 30 years ago August 16, 1987. I still remember it.

Being misunderstood sometimes happens just because we live out our faith on a daily basis. Are there any people in your life who don’t understand why you are a committed Christian?

- They misunderstand your commitment to God
- They misunderstand your commitment to worship every week

- They misunderstand your commitment to give your time and resources to the Lord

In the early church Christians were called cannibals because unbelievers misunderstood the Lord's Supper. Christians were charged with eating the body and blood of Christ in a cannibalistic sense. Early Christians met in caves for protection because the Roman government accused them of wild cannibalistic gatherings.

Yes, we receive the body and blood of Christ but not in a cannibalistic manner but in a supernatural real presence manner.

Consider King Saul and David.

David had just killed the giant Goliath. He was coming back from battle. King Saul was a very threatened and insecure man. As King Saul walked with David back from the battle the women of the city gathered to sing a song written in honor of David: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." I Sam 18:6f

Saul became outraged. Saul misunderstood. He thought this young David has just killed the giant and now the people are behind him and he's out to get my job. He wants to be king.

The Bible says: "Then Saul became very angry, for this saying displeased him; he said...Now what more can he have but the kingdom?" I Sam 18:8

David wasn't looking for the kingdom. He just served God and his king by killing the giant. But Saul misunderstood David. The Bible says: "And Saul looked at David with suspicion from that day on." I Sam 18:9

An innocent and courageous act was incorrectly interpreted so that deep down in Saul's heart, he was convinced that David was out to get the throne.

It is in this context that David wrote Psalm 140

- David was being misunderstood by King Saul
- David felt defenseless

- David feared for his life

Being misunderstood brings misery

A. It leaves us with a sense of vulnerability verse 1 and 4a

1. We cry out: Rescue me, keep me and protect me, O Lord
2. We feel defenseless and unprotected

Being misunderstood catches us off guard; we stumble into it inadvertently

B. It leaves us with exaggerations built up against us v2 “devise evil”

1. Saul exaggerated when he said David wants my kingdom – that’s why he killed Goliath
2. When people misunderstand us, they add exaggerations that build up in their minds
3. A slight misunderstanding may be built up into outright lies
4. Because we are sinners, sometimes we fuel the fire of exaggeration

C. Think of the damage that the tongue may do v3 “They make their tongues as sharp as a serpent’s the poison of vipers is on their lips.”

1. People not only misunderstand in their hearts they also speak it out loud

“Oh, I never knew that about him”

“Why it makes sense about her, now that you mention it”

2. A little gossip can become a big lie

In the N.T. James wrote about the tongue that can control and destroy us: “The tongue...corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell...But no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.” James 3:6,8

David says a poison of a viper is under their lips. V3

No creature's tongue moves faster than a serpent's. They are sometimes called "treble-tongued" because their tongues move so fast they actually look like 3 tongues coming out of their mouths.

The tongue has the power and ability to destroy a person's life. David speaks of the traps people set with their words in vv 4 and 5: "Men plan to trip my feet...men have hidden a snare for me...they have set traps for me along my path."

How often don't we feel hurt because of "What they said..."

Overcoming Misunderstandings

A. Be connected to the Living Lord vv6-7

Give the issue to the Lord

1. Learn to let God fight our battles

"Lord, you are mine. I count on You right now! Lord, take care of the situation. I can't fight him or her. He's smarter than I am. He's been fighting longer. Besides, I am weary."

2. Exodus 14:14 "The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent"

3. Moses encouraged his people with these words from Exodus as the Egyptians were coming at them and they were ready to cross the Red Sea

4. David invites the Lord to take care of those who would hurt him vv8-11

We say as David in Psalm 140

- Lord, I am defenseless
- Lord, I am misunderstood
- Lord, they will never believe me
- Lord, you take over

Psalm 62 "My honor depends upon God"

Romans 5 "Suffering produces perseverance, character and hope."

James 1 May we be...

- Quick to listen
- Slow to speak
- Ready to forgive

B. Count on God to deliver us and help us grow in faith and trust

1. God is taking care of it

Faith grows when we depend upon the Lord

2. We grow when we are misunderstood

- We rely upon the Lord
- We see Him as our defender and protector
- God is our refuge and strength even when someone is accusing us falsely
- We may feel crushed and bruised but....we have a Savior who...

* Has forgiven us when we have spoken against others

* Has lived a perfect life for us so that we may be perfect before God

* Everyday speaks to the Father on behalf of us Romans 8

* Has promised that He will never leave or forsake us

* Has defeated our real enemy – the devil

You are not alone. You are not an orphan. You are not fatherless.

Go to your Father in heaven.

Romans 8:31 “If God is for us nobody can be against us...”