

17th Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map
Pastor Roger W. Huffman

2 Corinthians 2:5-11
September 20, 2015

Learn to practice Christian discipline as a rescue mission

- ❖ Nov. 25, 2014 - US rescue mission freed 8 hostages
 - ◆ 2 weeks later, under threat to Luke Somers, a US rescue mission failed
 - ◆ Rescue missions are hard work - supported - widely approved
- ❖ What about a church's rescue mission to free captives of sin and Satan?
 - ◆ Not widely supported outside and even inside the church - Why?
 - Church seen as acting like *morality police*
 - ◆ Sadly, churches have contributed to this impression
 - ◆ When it's Law motivated, not a gospel motivated rescue
 - **False** notions of the *gospel* and *Christian love*
 - ◆ *We're all sinners. Who are we to point out anyone else's sin?*
 - ◆ *It doesn't look and feel like love to hurt people's feelings. Isn't the church in the business of comforting and building up?*
 - ◆ What would you think of a doctor who says...
 - *Since I get sick, who am I to treat sick people?*
 - *While I could act to save my patient's life, the treatment is painful and requires painful rehab. I don't do pain. I'll say nice things.*
 - ◆ Parents who avoid correction, conflict, and discipline ruin children.

Learn to practice Christian discipline as a rescue mission

- ❖ Christians recognize the **need for rescue** from sin and death
 - ◆ Sin is bad. Unchecked sin spreads, ruins, destroys, and kills.
 - Sin is not just a list of crimes. It's a deadly force at work in sinners.
 - *Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough?* 1 Cor 5:6
 - ◆ When wickedness is allowed to reign, it infects and spreads.
 - ◆ In each heart and mind - in a community of believers
 - ◆ The sinful nature/flesh challenges the rescuing reign of Christ in us.
 - ◆ Sin takes captive, enslaves, blinds, destroys, kills - *addictions*
 - ◆ Where sin reigns - Satan & death are taking over - Christ out
 - ◆ Like infection and cancer - ignoring is not love. It's foolish!

Learn to practice Christian discipline as a rescue mission

- ❖ Begin with yourself
 - ◆ Spiritual life now: a daily rescue mission from sin's infection
 - ◆ **Not** personal morality police, i.e. motivated by guilt and fear!
 - ◆ Love for Jesus, truth, freedom from sin's dirty work
 - daily work of changing: *taking off the Old and putting on the New*
 - The hard work - joyous work - freeing - life-giving and enriching
 - ◆ Invite your fellow Christians to help you - open to correction
 - ◆ Learn gospel rescue-minded communication and care
- ❖ Practice with your fellow believers
 - ◆ Build caring, secure relationships - rescue teamwork
 - ◆ Recognize it is *your business* - the mission of every believer
 - ◆ See it as gospel work - confidence in the power of the gospel
 - ◆ Early intervention often pre-empts full press rescue missions
- ❖ Support and encourage Christian discipline in our church family
 - ◆ Law/Gospel Rescue Mission is Christian, Christ-like love in action
 - ◆ Pray for and care about those under discipline, promoting repentance
 - ◆ When crushed, acknowledging rebellion - *forgive and comfort*
 - ◆ Lead the repentant to their pastor to receive forgiveness.
 - ◆ The **last stage** of this Rescue Mission - full restoration in the church family can be the **hardest part**.
 - No room for conditional forgiveness. Celebrate like widow & Father
 - A rescue mission mindset recognizes weaknesses - don't tempt

Only Christians - who know:

- the true character and power of sin,
- the rescue mission of Christ's good news,
- the loving partnership we share in our pilgrimage, and
- the joy that gospel powered victories bring
- will see Christian discipline as Christian - a premiere work of Christ-like love.

Learn to practice Christian discipline as a rescue mission