

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, September 17th, 2023
Rev. Gerry Gallant

Radical Forgiveness
Proper 19
Matthew 18:21-35

Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

O God, you summon the day to dawn,
you teach the morning to waken the earth.

**For you, the valleys shall sing for joy,
the trees of the field shall clap their hands.**

For you, the kings of the earth shall bow,
the poor and the persecuted shall shout for joy.

**Your love and mercy shall last forever,
fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise.**

Great is your name.

Great is your love. Amen.

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

With you, gracious God,
we move into this time of worship,
grateful that you are never farther
than the reach of our need and our prayer.
You who tower over the universe
are yet intimately present,
always renewing the face of the earth,
always renewing the faith of your children.
Now, in your mercy, make your way past
all that worries and distracts us
to lodge in us anew and to center
our small worship on your great glory. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn #461: "Be Thou My Vision" (V1,2,3)

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
 naught be all else to me, save that thou art,
 thou my best thought in the day and the night,
 waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom; be thou my true word,
 I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
 thou my great Father, thine own may I be,
 thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.

Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;
 be thou my arrand and be thou my might;
 thou my soul's shelter and thou my high tower,
 raise thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.

Call to Confession

Prepare the way of the Lord!
 Let us make our confession to God.

Prayer of Confession

**Almighty and merciful God,
 we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep.
 We have followed too much
 the devices and desires of our own hearts.
 We have offended against your holy laws.
 We have left undone those things which we ought to have done;
 and we have done those things which we ought not to have done.
 O Lord, have mercy upon us.
 Spare those who confess their faults.
 Restore those who are penitent,
 according to your promises declared to the world
 in Christ Jesus, our Lord.
 And grant, O merciful God, for his sake,
 that we may live a holy, just, and humble life
 to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news!
 Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,
 whose sin is covered.
 Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity,
 and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Know that in Jesus,
 God embraces you, forgives you,
 and strengthens you to live a renewed life.
 Thanks be to God

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
 Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread.
 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.
 For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,
 Forever and ever. Amen.**

Music Ministry: "They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love" Choir

Responsive Reading

Psalm 13:8-13

8 The LORD is merciful and gracious,
 slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

**9 He will not always chide,
 nor will he keep his anger forever.**

10 He does not deal with us according to our sins,
 nor repay us according to our iniquities.

**11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
 so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;**

12 as far as the east is from the west,
 so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

**13 As a father shows compassion to his children,
 so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.**

Children's Hymn #449: "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"

Lord, listen to your children praying,
 Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
 Lord, listen to your children praying.
 Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

Repeat

Children's Lesson

Prayer for illumination (Congregant Prepared)

Scripture

Matthew 18:21-35

²¹ Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" ²² Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

²³ "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵ And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰ He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. ³² Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Sermon

If you were here a few weeks ago we looked at Matthew 16:18.

Matthew 16:18

¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Jesus was telling Peter and the other disciples that the church would be built upon the 'Peta' the rock of the knowledge that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the One True Living God and that nothing in this world would ever overcome that church.

This was a reminder for all of us that church is not a physical building or a denomination, but instead the church of Jesus Christ is made up of the faithful Christians that live all over the

world and all throughout time. The Church is a people and consistently in the Scriptures we are told that as the Children of God we need to love God first and then love our neighbor as ourselves, and even our enemies. Which puts us in an interesting place when we reach today's Scripture reading.

Forgiving others is probably the most difficult challenge that Christians face as they try to live a Christ like life here on earth. Forgiveness is not just a small part of our faith it is a core component of how we are called to live, Forgiveness and grace is how we show people who Jesus Christ is in our lives.

This is hard when someone hurts you, or when someone hurts someone, you love, or when people do wrong to us or the people we care about.

However, to be a true follower of Christ means to be a practitioner of radical forgiveness. It is called radical forgiveness, because many rational and caring people are willing to come to some conventional form of forgiveness, they will forgive people of the things that do not do any real damage, that is easy forgiveness, they will also forgive people of the things that they believe were caused by the circumstances that that person found themselves in at the time, that is a rational forgiveness.

Yet Christians are called to forgive when it seems reckless and unreasonable, Christians are called to have an unending supply of forgiveness and to have the ability to forgive even when it would seem impossible. This is why Christians have radical forgiveness.

This form of radical forgiveness is one of the most demanding aspects of the faith that is placed upon Christians, but just because it is difficult and demanding does not mean we can ignore what Jesus is calling for us to be and do. Radical forgiveness will often go against all of the wisdom of the world, it will seem wrong, it fights against our natural instincts, and it is very uncomfortable.

Yet it is something that we have to face, even though we know that there is real hurt, real pain, real damage, and real wrongs involved.

That is why C.S. Lewis said that 'We all agree that forgiveness is a beautiful idea until we have to practice it.'

So, as we talk about radical forgiveness here today, understand that it is not an easy thing to do, but open your hearts and mind to the Spirit as we talk about how radical forgiveness recognizes that God is in control, God is good, the gospel is the truth, and the grace of God is so much bigger than anything else we face in this world.

Radical forgiveness is not a burden that we have as Christians but instead is an opportunity that God gives to us to set aside the things which burden us in this world and place them instead with Him as we live and serve him in this world.

There are a lot of misconceptions about forgiveness in this world, both about what it is and what it is not, and it is often these misunderstandings about forgiveness that lead us into a frame of mind in which we do not want to forgive.

Perhaps the most important and difficult idea about what forgiveness is not to overcome is the idea that forgiveness can have conditions.

Wordily forgiveness can have conditions attached because it is rational forgiveness,

Radical forgiveness is unconditional. It is not based upon someone else's behavior or response. It is not based upon anything earned, deserved, bargained for, or paid for; it is given freely.

This means that we forgive without a promise that it will never happen again. When you tell someone 'I will forgive you if...' that is not forgiveness because forgiveness has no conditions attached.

The second misunderstanding about forgiveness is that it somehow minimizes that act, deed, word, or offense. Forgiveness is needed because there was hurt or offense that was significant enough to require forgiveness. Remember what we spoke about last week, when a brother sins against us we need to say so, and to just brush it off like nothing happened is to minimize the offense. We should not be pretending that things did not hurt or offend us, we should not be minimizing the forgiveness by saying things like 'Don't worry about it, or It's no big deal, or it's okay, it's not a problem.' When we do this, we are not really forgiving we are avoiding.

Forgiveness is also not just carrying on afterwards like nothing happened. Too many people in this world think that forgiving and forgetting go hand in hand and they do not. When we forgive someone, we are not saying that everything is back to as it was, the relationship needs to be rebuilt, the trust needs to be re-earned, there must be signs of genuine repentance for the relationship to continue.

Which is why forgiveness does not equal forgetting. When someone hurts us or offends us to the point where we need to forgive them, truthfully, we cannot forget that feeling. Forgiveness is not forgetting that feeling, it is replacing it with something new. It is remembering that even out of bad things, good things may come from God.

Remember the story of Joseph in the Old Testament, thrown in a well to die by his brothers, then sold into slavery instead, rose to power only to be falsely accused and imprisoned, rose to power again only to have the very brothers that caused it all to end up at his feet seeking mercy.

Joseph had not forgotten his life, he remembered all of the injustice and suffering he had endured, it was critical to who he was at that moment, but he remembers it all in the context of

forgiveness, he saw God's hand at work in his life and saw an opportunity of redemption and relationship, not one of revenge.

Forgiveness is not giving up on justice, it is handing justice over to the one power that can distribute the ultimate justice in this world. It is saying God that hurt me and I will trust you in seeing that justice is served.

Finally, forgiveness is not weakness. We live in a revenge and get even driven world, so those who practice radical forgiveness are often seen as being weak. However, forgiveness is not weakness, the ability to forgive someone who has wronged you takes great strength. Keeping a record of who has done you wrong, who has offended you and who has hurt you is an easy task, letting all those things go is what requires great strength.

Forgiveness is not conditional, minimizing, resuming, forgetting, forfeiting justice or weak. So, what is forgiveness?

Peter asks Jesus how many times he is called to forgive his brother who has sinned against him. Some translations like the ESV say that Jesus told him seventy-seven times, other translations will say that Jesus said seventy times seven, or 490 times.

This is what the rabbi's of the time taught, you had to forgive a man three times, then you were no longer required to forgive, you had done your part.

What Jesus is telling Peter does against the teachings of the rabbi's and of the whole culture. He is not saying he is changing the number; he is saying that there is a whole new standard of forgiveness that his followers must hold. To really get what Jesus is saying here we need to remember that the number seven in the Scripture represents completion or perfection. So what Jesus is telling his disciples is you need to completely forgive people every time. There is no set level or number of times that Christians are called to forgive.

Jesus is saying its not about trying a little harder to be forgiving, or being a little better at forgiving, or even just forgiving people a few more times. Jesus is saying that I am changing the ideas about forgiveness, there is no limit to forgiveness.

And that is the beauty of this message, because that is exactly the kind of forgiveness that God has given to each of his people. That is the Gospel message, an unconditional forgiveness of sins for those who know that Jesus is the Messiah.

So, if you do not believe in Jesus, or the Gospel. If you do not believe that Jesus died upon the cross for your sins, and by the grace of God the blood of Jesus Christ paid the debt you owed for your sins then you can go about this world holding grudges, anger and being generally unforgiving.

If all you know is this world and the things in it, it makes sense to want revenge and pay back, it makes sense to hurt someone who hurts you. If there is no just God that watches over everything then when you are hurt get even, when you are wronged, get revenge.

But if you are a believer, you cannot look at the world that way because there is a just God, and because Jesus Christ went to the cross and died to pay a debt that we could never pay, Because the grace of God and the forgiveness that we received has no limit, no cap, and no end. Christians have radical forgiveness because we have received radical forgiveness.

This is the idea that Jesus is trying to get across to the disciples in this parable. There is a man who owes ten thousand talents to his king. Jesus is making it clear from the very beginning that this is a parable because the idea of someone owing ten thousand talents is beyond understanding. It would be like someone lending someone else roughly two hundred and twenty-six million dollars to a cashier.

Since there is no way that this person would be able to pay, the King orders that the man, his wife, and his children be sold to repay the debt. The man falls upon his knees before the king and begs for his mercy, he promises to pay back the debt that he owes.

In reality he could never pay back the debt, he could not even pay the interest that was owed on the debt. The king knows this, he knows that the money is lost, that the debt will never be repaid, yet instead of insisting on the selling of the man and his family to recover some of the debt that is owed, he has great mercy. The king forgives the debt that the man owes him. The king did not just forgive the debt, he accepted the loss, he took on the full brunt of the debt.

Remember this is a parable. The debt that we all owe to God because of our sinful nature must be paid. In the Old Testament this was done through sacrifice, through the blood of animals. The priests of the temple were constantly sacrificing different animals to atone for the sins of God's people, yet they could not keep up with the debt that was being incurred by the people.

It is that unpayable debt that every human being owes to God, one that all the life and blood they possess could not even pay the interest on. It is that debt that Jesus Christ paid for everyone who faithfully follows him in this world. God did not just forgive our debt, he incurred the debt, the loss fully upon himself.

The servant, now debt free, goes out and finds a fellow servant that owes him one hundred denarii, around one hundred dollars. He looks at this man and grabs him in a chokehold and demands the one hundred dollars that he is owed saying, 'Pay back what you owe me.'

His fellow servant falls on his knees before the man and asks for mercy and time to pay back the debt that is owed. Doesn't that sound familiar, this is exactly what that man had done in the presence of the King. The biggest difference is that the debt that was owed to the king was never going to be repaid and the debt that the man is owed is easily payable.

I wonder how often God sees this in his people. People who come into his presence every Sunday, people who praise him, worship him, sing of his mercy and his grace and then go forth into the world and demand justice for everyone else in the world.

That is what the servant does, the servant refuses to have mercy, he has the man thrown into irons in prison until the debt could be repaid. The others who witnessed this were distressed and they went to the King and told him everything that they had witnessed.

The King calls his servant back to him.

Matthew 18:32-35

³² Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.'

Let that sink in a moment.

God wants us to forgive our brothers and sisters from our hearts.

So, what does it mean to forgive?

Forgiveness is freeing someone. Have you ever made a mistake, messed up or done something wrong? Something you knew could cause social, emotional, or financial damage to you.

Have you ever done or said something to a friend or family member that you knew hurt them, that created a wall between you? Have you ever wondered if they would be able to forgive you?

Do you remember that feeling of worry, of tension, of separation that was there as you awaited the outcome? And do you remember how you felt when you were forgiven?

Forgiveness sets people free of all of that pain, suffering, anxiety, and worry. Yet forgiveness does not only set the guilty party free. Remember in the parable, the man who went back to prison was the man servant who had refused to forgive.

Being unforgiving is like being thrown into prison. Being unforgiving is a prison that many people find themselves in, they think that they are hurting the person who offended them or hurt them, but truthfully the only person that they are really hurting is themselves.

Think about being angry at someone who cut you off on the road, you are busy sitting there cursing and fuming, and they are driving away completely unaware that they have done anything wrong. Who is hurt in that situation?

People who refuse to forgive spend their lives holding onto bitterness and are often miserable as they seek out ways to get revenge, get payback or to get even. Their whole lives are entangled in the life of others, not themselves. They torment themselves.

Anger and bitterness, hate and the desire for revenge and payback are all destructive emotions, they are a cancer that eats away at your very soul. Being unforgiving and filled with these emotions just takes you further and further away from the person that God is asking for us to be.

Forgiveness sets people free; forgiveness lets you out of a prison that you can lock yourself into when you get caught up in self.

When we forgive, we are obeying God's commands.

Ephesians 4:32

32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Colossians 3:13

12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

God does not ask us to forgive, he commands it in his word. If we want to be a true follower of Christ, we need to learn to forgive. We show that we love and trust in God by letting go of resentment, bitterness, the idea of payback and revenge and place the problem in God's hands and trust in his justice.

In fact, this is something that we speak about every week here:

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

I think that is pretty clear, don't you?

We are forgiven and that is why we should forgive others and that means we are not going to seek out our own form of revenge or justice, we are not going to try to get even.

We may have been hurt, offended, or wronged. We may have the possibility of revenge or pay back, but we do not. When you forgive someone, you give up that chance, you cancel their debt to you fully, you cancel the pain and the hurt and give it over to God.

God is Just and he will ensure that everyone will stand before him and receive a just sentence for their lives here on earth.

Romans 12:18-19

17 Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

When we walk into God's presence, we always seek his grace and mercy and we need to trust in him to carry out his justice, in his time, and according to his plan.

Miroslav Volf said this 'To triumph fully, evil needs two victories, not one. The first victory happens when an evil deed is perpetrated; the second victory, when evil is returned. After the first victory, evil would die if the second victory did not infuse it with new life.'

Forgiveness frees us and kills evil because forgiveness is grace enacted.

Forgiveness is knowing that we were hurt, offended, or done wrong and instead of choosing to live in the thoughts of payback, revenge and justice we are choosing to be filled with love. Choosing to give up the idea of getting even or revenge or wishing ill.

Forgiveness means choosing to show mercy and grace to those who have hurt you. It means asking God to bless them, not because they deserve it, but because they don't. It is a recognition that every Christian did not deserve God's blessing, his grace, and his mercy when they were living as a sinner, but God still gave it to them, and praying that God would show the same grace, mercy, and forgiveness in the life of those who have done them wrong, hurt them or sinned against them.

And you do this, you forgive them in this way, not just once, not just three times, but seventy-seven times or seventy times seven times. You keep doing it until you forgive them in your heart, it is not easy, it's hard. In some cases, you might be forgiving someone for the same thing over and over and over, and you might feel frustrated and angered, but remember that is exactly what God is doing for you, you still sin, you still offend, you still hurt God with your actions, and he still has an abundance of grace for you.

And every time we forgive others it should remind of the forgiveness that God has given us. This is yet another reason radical forgiveness is so important for the faithful, it reminds them of what Jesus did for each of us when he went up on the cross and shed his blood for our sins. It reminds us of just how amazing God's love is and how great his grace and mercy are upon his people.

Radical forgiveness is one of the ways that the kingdom of God is brought into this broken world. The kingdom of God is not brought to unbelievers through military might, or through

political intrigues. It is not brought by any worldly form of persuasion, or persecution. Instead, it comes upon people silently, it comes in the voices of conversations between people. It comes in unconventional ways from unconventional people. It comes through the gradual transformation of the hearts and minds of people, often just one at a time.

The kingdom of God is brought most easily to the world through Christian living their lives as an example of the person that they follow. It is brought to non-believers when Christians walk as the Salt and Light of their communities, when they show people who Jesus is in their lives. People become fascinated with God, when they see others living in Christlike ways, practicing the same radical forgiveness that he had. When they forgive others in the same way that they are forgiven, not just once, not just three times, but perfectly forgive others of their sins and their transgressions, unconditionally.

Many people will say that this kind of radical forgiveness cannot exist in our world. However, every once in awhile God provides an incredible example of this radical forgiveness for us all to witness and learn from.

In 2006, in a small town near Nickle Mines, Pennsylvania, God provides the world another example of radical forgiveness. The story of what occurred is retold in a book called *Amish Grace*, which begins with three words which seem worldly; 'Amish School Shooting.'

On October second a man walked into a single room Amish schoolhouse. He was troubled, his life was in chaos, he had lost a child and he told the people who he was holding in the schoolhouse, 'I am angry at God, and I need to punish some Christian girls to get even with him.' On that day he killed 5 young Amish girls and injured 5 more before finally taking his own life.

Like so many schools shooting when the news broke there was shock and anger at how such a thing could happen. However, another story was about to take place in that town, one that was more shocking to the world, one that would stun them.

Within hours of the killings, a group of Amish men from that community had gone to the house of the wife of the man who had killed their children, to bring her forgiveness.

They brought gifts of food to her and her children, they told her that they had forgiven her husband and held no anger or animosity against her. They even went so far as to offer to help provide for her and her family should she have any needs in the future.

Later that same evening, an Amish man showed up on the doorstep of the father of the killer. Not to yell, not to condemn, but instead to comfort a fellow man who too had lost a loved one. He stood on that doorstep for an hour, held the father in his arms and told him, 'We forgive you'.

On the evening of the killings, as one of the families of a little girl that had been killed was gathered around her coffin, mourning, and praying, the slain girl's grandfather spoke up and told the young people gathered there that, 'we should not think evil of the man who did this.'

That same man when he was interviewed by the associated press said, 'I hope the man's widow and children stay near here. They will have lots of friends and a lot of support.'

In the days that followed the members of the Amish community appeared on the doorsteps of the family and the parents of the killer to offer their condolences and their forgiveness.

Five days later, as the family of the killer gathered together to bury him, more than seventy-five members of the Amish community gathered with the family to share in their loss and their mourning.

Some of the Amish mourners were gathered around the killer's wife, giving her hugs, and supporting her in her time of loss, were the parents of the young girls that he had killed, parents who had buried their own children and then come to support the wife of the man who had taken killed them. There were no hard feelings, no grudges, no anger, no hatred, just radical forgiveness, just the love of Jesus Christ.

The funeral director who was there to witness this all, had one very profound bit of witness to share. He said, 'I was lucky enough to be at the cemetery when the Amish families of the children who had been killed came to greet the widow and offer their forgiveness. And that is something I will never forget, not ever. I knew that I was witnessing a miracle.'

When people all around the nation started to raise funds to help the families of the young girls who were killed, the families decided to share the funds with the widow and family of the man who had killed their children.

The Amish act of radical forgiveness changed the narrative of the storyline coming out of that small community. The media was reporting of the Nickle mines miracle instead of the Nickle mines tragedy. Radical forgiveness had turned this from a story of loss and tragedy into a story of the grace, mercy, forgiveness, and love of Jesus Christ that was displayed by these Amish families.

The miracle of Nickel Mines is an echo of the miracle of the cross. As Christians we do not see the Death of Jesus Christ upon the cross as a tragedy, which it was, an innocent man died in one of the most horrible ways possible upon that cross. We do not see it that way though because we see what really happened that day, Jesus took on the sins of the world, he paid the debt of our sins with his blood, and he responded only with forgiveness. And then God made it all perfect when he raised his Son from the grave just three days later.

The Amish that lived in that community, understood the cross and understood they were recipients of the forgiveness that flows from the cross, but they also knew that they were called to be active practitioners of that some costly forgiveness in their own lives.

Radical forgiveness as its heart, means being willing to take up your cross and to be a follower of Jesus Christ. It means to be willing to die to your own selfishness and to extend the grace, mercy, love, and forgiveness that Jesus extended to you as he carried his cross up to Golgotha. Jesus looked down from the cross and said, 'father forgive them.'

This is what it means to be a follower of Christ, it means to look upon those who offend us, hurt us, and sin against us and say, 'Father forgive them.' As the Amish elders of Nickle Mines said, 'We have to forgive. Refusing to forgive is not an option. It's just a normal part of our living. It's just standard Christian forgiveness.'

Just standard Christian forgiveness.

Let us pray,

Neighborly Love, Service and Helpfulness

Almighty and eternal God,
 we are poor sinners
 and stand under your righteous judgment.
 With all our hearts
 we thank you for taking all our guilt from us
 and laying it on your dear Son Christ Jesus.
 Graciously sustain us in faith
 and govern us by your Holy Spirit,
 that we may live according to your will,
 in neighborly love, service, and helpfulness,
 and not give way to wrath or revenge,
 that we may not incur your wrath
 but always find in you a gracious Father;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord,
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one true God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Source: Veit Dietrich, d. 1549, Trinity 22

Hymn: "My Worth Is Not in What I Own"

My worth is not in what I own, not in strength of flesh and bone
 But in the costly wounds of love at the cross
 My worth is not in skill or name, in win or lose or pride or shame
 But in the blood of Christ that flowed in the cross.

CHORUS: I rejoice in my redeemer, greatest treasure, wellspring of my soul
I will trust in Him, no other, my soul is satisfied in Him alone

As summer flowers we fade and die, fame, youth and beauty hurry by.
But life eternal calls to us at the cross
I will not boast in wealth or might, or human wisdom's fleeting light.
But I will boast in knowing Christ at the cross.

CHORUS

Two wonders here that I confess, my worth and my unworthiness.
My value fixed my ransom paid at the cross

CHORUS

Invitation to Offering

Offering

Offering

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3). We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer:

E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. standrewspert offering@gmail.com If you have an Offering Envelope #, please include it in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (e.g., Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.

Offertory Prayer

(Congregant Prepared)

Closing Hymn # 441: "Stand Up and Bless the Lord" (V 1,4,5)

Stand up and bless the Lord;
God's people now rejoice;
stand up and bless the Lord your God
with heart and soul and voice.

God is our strength and song;
now is salvation ours.

God's love in Christ we now proclaim
with all our ransomed powers.

Stand up and bless the Lord;
the Lord your God adore;
stand up and bless God's glorious name
henceforth forevermore.

Pastoral Prayer

With you, wondrous God, we move from this time of worship.
Thank you for calling us to worship you and for accepting
our praises as a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to you.
Thank you, O God, that your Word came to us in power,
inspired by your Holy Spirit.
Thank you for nourishing us with your Word and Spirit
and strengthening us with your grace for the days ahead.
Thank you for listening to prayers that rose to you from humble hearts.
Thank you for surrounding us with brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ
who love us, share our triumphs and disappointments,
and support us in times of need.
Thank you that our offering may provide relief
for those who suffer in poverty of body or spirit.
In the week ahead, O God, may we turn each moment of joy into praise,
and may we cling to your promise in times of suffering.
Guide us, O God, so that we can obey you.
Make your light shine through us
so that others will see our good deeds and glorify you.
Fill our lives with love for you, O God,
and for the world that so desperately needs its Savior, in whom we pray. **Amen.**

Benediction

As you leave this place this day,
may God's love sustain you,
and may you love those who surround you.
May God's Spirit empower you,
and may you empower all those you meet.
May God's joy fill your hearts,
and may this joy overflow
to the ends of the earth for God's glory,
now and forever. **Amen.**