

## The Kingdom of God, pt.13

### Driver's Ed

Luke 6.37–38, 41–42

#### Intro

1. Driving in a country with few traffic laws...driving in country with many.
2. Traffic laws (ways we relate to one another) in the world & the KOG. They're very different; they help us relate to each other in ways that are not only healthy, but draw the presence of God into relationships. It's the weather system of heaven.
3. Context – it's about to get very tense with the disciples; they are going to be judged and start judging; people are about to start taking from them and taking advantage of them...
4. Read text

#### Put on the brakes! (6.37a)

- Don't judge & don't condemn
  - 2 "don'ts"
  - It's a critical, harsh, and/or opinionated attitude...passing judgment on people. What's being condemned here is a critical, merciless, harsh, loveless attitude. You size things up based upon what little you know. WE must avoid snap judgments, etc.
    - Picture of a child crying – why is this child crying? I don't know. We often make determination about things which we know little about.
    - Earliest counseling experience with couple.
    - Melanie Calvin, Ex Dir of River of Hope, and her changing perspective on people in need.
    - Recent story about how what you hear often trumps the truth of a given situation. We often succumb to what is first or loudest or most frequent. We easily fall into judgment

- Hold the tongue. A loose tongue is often an indicator of a judgmental spirit. WE must avoid saying what is untrue, unkind & unnecessary.
  - This is a Kingdom value! Bringing the KOG means I think the best of the person & realize I don't have all the truth. Kingdom minded people have a fruit bearing mindset. L.6.43 tells us to look at the fruit of the life
  - If I do have to judge (1Cor.5.12) it must be based upon clear sin & my attitude is for redemption not condemnation.
- Put on the brakes when it comes to judging & condemning.

Be not angry that you cannot make others as you want them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish to be.

—Thomas à Kempis

Hit the gas! (6.37b – 38)

- Forgive & Give
  - No exceptions. Lavishly & abundantly. Similar to last week's message on dealing with our enemies.
  - Giving has to do with every type of giving – financial, time, service. Giving to others has the effect of changing our view point of others and their viewpoint of us.
  - Forgiving is a form of giving. You are giving them freedom from a yoke of guilt and conviction. In forgiving you are unlocking the chains that have bond them up & letting them fly freer.
  - Story of Victoria Ruvlov

Story of Victoria Ruvlov Looking to Long Island, Jay Evensen editorialized in the *Desert Morning News* that "forgiveness has power to change the future"....

He wrote about Victoria Ruvolo, a 44-year-old collection agency manager, and 19-year-old Ryan Cushing. Mr. Cushing and his friends stole a credit card and then took off on a shopping spree...for no reason.

They stole a 20-pound frozen turkey and proceeded to throw it from their speeding vehicle headlong into the windshield of the automobile driven by Victoria Ruvolo. The

result: the victim underwent surgery for six hours as metal plates and other pieces of hardware were fitted together in an effort to rebuild her face...

The prosecutor in Ruvolo's case stated that for crimes such as this one, victims often "feel no punishment is harsh enough." In fact, "Death doesn't even satisfy them," the attorney stated.

How did Victoria react to what had happened to her? She was primarily concerned with "salvaging the life of her 19-year-old assailant." She did not seek revenge in any way. She sought information about the youth and how he was raised, insisting that he be offered a plea deal. He could plead guilty to second-degree assault, be put in the county jail for six months and placed on one year's probation. He could have been sent to prison for 25 years, returning to society middle-aged with no job skills or prospects.

According to editor Evensen, "this is only half the story. The rest of it, what happened the day this all played out in court, is the truly remarkable part."

The young man walked "carefully and tentatively" to where his victim was seated in the courtroom. With tears and in a whisper he apologized, "I'm so sorry for what I did to you." He and Victoria embraced, both weeping. She stroked his head, patted him on the back, and comforted him. "It's OK," she said. "I just want you to make your life the best it can be." It was reported that "hardened prosecutors, and even reporters, were choking back tears."

The editor concluded: "Slowly, humans seem to be learning to understand the power of forgiveness. As a healing agent, it appears to be stronger than any surgery, counseling or anger-management course."

- Giving & forgiving are Kingdom values. They are more than just good principles to live by. These values whether they are expressed in personal relationships or on the field of battle change the destiny of people & nations.
- Hit the gas when it comes to giving & forgiving.

Look both ways. (6.41-42)

- Look inside first –
  - This is a humorous statement and must have caused the crowd to laugh.
  - It's self discipline before mutual discipline.
  - When we, under God's grace & discipline, deal with our own planks first it gives us mercy & grace towards others. We are far more able to demonstrate the grace of God towards

others when we have received it while dealing with our own sin.

- I am far more merciful and able to assist a person out of an area of sin, when I have received God's forgiveness & grace in an area.
  - AA sponsorship based upon being an alcoholic. How many people would be in AA if their sponsors were non-alcoholics?
- Before you go trotting off to blow someone out of the water make sure the plank is out of your eye and you have God's heart for that person.
- Look outside last
  - We are to do this. There is mutual accountability in the KOG. There are no independent Christians.
  - We can't let our own sin issues stymie us from talking to others about their sin issues.
  - We need to deal with the sin issues in the lives of others, but it must be tempered with God's heart of grace & reconciliation.
  - We also must see the potential/destiny that is there for that person. We're not going to "straighten him out" but we're going to assist him on the road to his destiny in God's Kingdom.

Scholar and author D. A. Carson tells of a time when he and a friend were going to the beach for some much-needed peace and quiet, but when they got there they found a horde of high school kids celebrating graduation with lots of beer, loud music and, shall we say, public displays of affection.

He writes, "Deeply disappointed that my evening's relaxation was being shattered by a raucous party, I was getting ready to cover my disappointment by moral outrage. I turned to Ken to unload the venom but stopped as I saw him staring at the scene with a faraway look in his eyes. And then he said, rather softly, 'High school kids—what a mission field!'"

- *D. A. Carson, When Jesus Confronts the World, p.110 (Baker Book House); submitted by Lee Eclov.*
- When it comes to living in the Kingdom realm we always look inside first. The attitude of the tax collector in Luke 18.13, "Father, forgive me a sinner."

### Earning "Good driver points". (6.38)

- By giving, forgiving, not judging or condemning we are heaping up rewards.
- This is marketplace terminology and is referring to the fold in the garment around the waste. It's there to collect a lot of food.
- The food isn't just lumped there; it's supersized; it's heaped on top!
- 2 Cor.9.6