

Three Scary Words

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[0 : 00] Well, hey, good morning. My name is Ray Sweet from First Christian Church in Greensburg, Indiana. As always, if you'd like to learn more about the church, you can go to FCCGreensburg.com or you can check out the FCC Greensburg Facebook page.

But hey, thank you so much for tuning in today. Our heart is always to get into the Word of God, but most of all, let that Word get into us and transform these hearts to live for Jesus with everything we are.

Now, welcome back to the second week of our series called Just Jesus. Because let's be honest, in our world where everyone's constantly screaming their opinion and bashing those who don't agree, in a political climate where one person thinks the president is going to save everything and the next thinks he's going to ruin it, in a culture where anything goes and chaos engulfs us, sometimes we just need to step away from all that noise and listen to one voice.

Just Jesus. And that's what this series is all about as we lead up to Easter, walking through select passages in the book of Matthew. So if you want to go ahead and grab your Bible, turn about three quarters of the way-ish through the first book of the New Testament, the book of Matthew.

And we're going to be looking at seven passages in this series that show us a glimpse into the heart of God. And I appreciate Tyler, Pastor Tyler, kicking off this series last week, breaking down the temptations of Jesus, many of which we face every day.

[1 : 36] And yet, by the Holy Spirit's power, we too can walk in victory. Now, from time to time, I'll do a little class participation, usually through social media.

So last week, I asked the question, what are the scariest words to hear? And I knew some would take that very seriously and share some gut-wrenching words that maybe you have had said to you. And I also knew others would take it more lighthearted and have some fun with it. But for time's sake, I just want to share the more lighthearted responses with a heart of compassion towards those who had those hard words said to them.

Now, here's the lighthearted responses. One young mom of a three-year-old said that she gets scared when she hears these words, Uh-oh! Or what about for you husbands when your wife says, I've been thinking.

One man in our church said he's faced the scary words from Pastor Mitch when he heard, Have you ever thought about serving with the youth? Or even a young couple that was shocked to hear, Surprise!

[2 : 46] You're having twins! Or what about this presidential quote, We're from the government and we're here to help. One elder said this. He said he was terrified to hear, Hey, you're preaching this morning.

How about this one? Don't freak out, but... And to end with the stinkiest words of all, Somebody bring me the plunger! See, there's a lot of frightening words, But today we're going to talk about three scary words from Jesus That all of us probably don't want to hear, But honestly, we need to hear.

Love your enemies. Let me say that again because it's no fun. Love your enemies. Now, before we jump into Matthew chapter 5, Just picture in your mind for a second Those in your life at some point that you considered an enemy.

Maybe you still do. That rascal who slandered your name. That scoundrel who gossiped about you and left out the facts. The villain that cheated you. The wicked creature that ripped your heart out of your chest and stomped on it.

You know, to be honest, when I think about my life, Let's just be real here, okay? There are five or six faces that quickly come to my mind That at one time I considered an enemy.

[4 : 05] People who wounded me deeply. And probably like you, I've had to relinquish that bitterness. I've had to surrender that to God on way more than one occasion.

And even doing it once with a face that's in your head, Sometimes you've got to do that every day, right? Because we can come in here, We can come to this radio broadcast, And we can act like that we are these perfect little saints Who always forgive so easily because I'm just so holy.

Or we can just be honest and we can say, Jesus, do I really have to love that person? Because this is hard. My human nature would rather body slam them.

My flesh would rather verbally stomp them into the ground. So today we're actually going to deal with these hearts Because we will never forgive anyone As much as Jesus has already forgiven us Who are redeemed by his blood.

Let that simmer as I say it again. You will never, ever get close to forgiving another person As much as Jesus has forgiven you if you're a Christian.

[5 : 14] So today we're going to look at Matthew chapter 5 Starting in verse 43. And let me give you some quick context here. Matthew chapters 5 through 7 Has often been called the greatest sermon ever preached.

The sermon on the mount Where Jesus is sitting down on a hillside. He's on the north end of the Sea of Galilee. And the people are taking in every word Because they've never heard someone teach With the authority like Jesus.

He is proclaiming what the kingdom of God is all about. Correcting so many false teachings From their religious leaders. He's addressing wrong understandings Of the law of Moses And even showing them How those wrong understandings Translate into wrong living.

For example They understand the law against murdering To only apply to physical murder and killing. But Jesus says And I'll paraphrase here Nah If you're engulfed in anger towards others Then you've also violated that law.

You've murdered them in your heart. And I can raise my hand right now And say guilty as charged. They had interpreted the law against adultery To only mean the physical act of cheating on a spouse.

[6 : 30] But Jesus says Paraphrasing again Yeah that's adultery for sure But even if you don't physically commit the act If your heart is full of lust Then you're also guilty.

If you have that mindset of Well I can look as long as I don't touch I can flirt if it doesn't get out of hand Then that lust is leading us To commit adultery in our hearts While also putting us in the line Of intense temptation.

And often That temptation that we think we can control Leads to a physical act And then so much pain. And then we come to the last section Of him talking about the law of Moses here That Jesus will explain in the Sermon on the Mount And here's what he says Starting in Matthew 5 verse 43 As we look at the first part of this passage.

He says You have heard that it was said Love your neighbor and hate your enemy But I tell you to love your enemies And pray for those who persecute you That you may be children of your Father in heaven He causes his Son to rise on the evil And the good And he sends rain on the righteous And the unrighteous So if you're a note taker You can always go to the YouVersion Bible app That's Y-O-U YouVersion Bible app It's a free download It is incredible So many great resources there But if you go to the menu Go to events Go to First Christian Church of Greensburg Then you'll be able to see the outline that way But I want us to wrestle today With this passage And the first thing I want you to see Is that Christ-like love Resists pride's perversion It resists pride's perversion So what's the first Very first thing From Jesus here What does he say first

He says You have heard It was said Love your neighbor And hate your enemy Now our first instinct May be to think That this is a direct quote From scripture And Jesus is changing Or adding to the law But listen That's just not true Because here's what the word Actually says In Leviticus 19.18 It says Do not seek revenge Or bear a grudge Against anyone among your people But love your neighbor As yourself And then he gives some authority to it I am the Lord So here's what actually happened Rabbinic tradition So the rabbis The religious leaders Their tradition Okay Over the centuries Had corrupted What God's word makes clear And this is just one example Of it So when Jesus says Hey You have heard It was said What he's actually saying Is you may have been taught this But let me correct That perversion With the truth

[9 : 20] That sets men free And they changed this command By what they both added to it And what they left out See they omitted Two key words Love your neighbor Here it is As yourself And

the reason they left that out Is because it would immediately Be obvious That you don't hate anyone Because you don't hate yourself And then they added To the words Love your neighbor And then they say And hate your enemy Church that's nowhere In the verse And as John MacArthur Said in his commentary He said The words of scripture Were fully known But only partially taught And practiced Frequently he says They were even contradicted By rabbinic teaching And that's what Jesus Calls out here So hear me This is why we will never Ever as a church Put tradition Equal to Or above The truth of God's word

There are churches That put scripture And man-made tradition On the same level And often man-made tradition Wins out This is why You find so many teachings That people buy into That are found Nowhere In scripture In this church FCC Since 1832 When John O'Kane And John P. Thompson Rode horseback Into Greensburg They rang the courthouse bell To call people to worship Since then This body of believers Has been founded On this idea Of where the Bible speaks We speak Where the Bible is silent We are silent In other words Scripture From the very beginning This family has been committed To that famous Latin phrase In the Protestant movement Sola scriptura That means Scripture Alone Is our authority In all matters Of faith And practice Because listen All are sinners In need of grace And we cannot trust

Man-made ideas Because according to Jeremiah 17 And we know this To be true The heart Is deceitfully wicked It's always running The wrong direction Right?

So easily The flesh takes control So we trust Only in the words Of the one Who breathed These Holy Spirit Inspired words To his children Okay So Thinking about These religious leaders Who perverted The word With enough truth To get people To buy into it But also They changed The word of God To fit their comforts And their self-righteousness See most of the Religious leaders Loved Being put on a pedestal They loved Getting attention That should be reserved Only for the Lord They also relished Looking down Upon those They deemed As the nastiest Of society They had their Fancy garments And they loved To kind of be Set apart And be special And be better Than others Now do you remember Those words They said To Jesus' disciples These Pharisees Said Why does Your Savior Why does Jesus Why does he Eat with sinners

And the answer Is simple Because that's All of us And he died For our sins What was Jesus' Purpose to come What does the word say He came to seek And save The lost Now let's bring This home a little bit Is anyone Seen the parallel With what happens In so many churches Today Manipulating The scriptures To mean What I want And what I think Is right What fits my culture Listen this may Come across strong And I don't mean It rudely But I think It has to come Across strong It doesn't matter What you or I think Is right Let me say that again It doesn't matter What I think Is right Like James 4 14 says We're just a mist Here today And gone tomorrow And yet Jesus is eternal And his truth Is the righteous Standard We follow And the job Of any legit Religious leader Is to humble Ourselves before The word of God Seek to understand

[13 : 34] It in context And then present it As it's laid out In scripture Where we can Apply it to life Think about Our world today You hear all the time Even in some churches This phrase Love is love But the truth Breathed from the one Who created you Who created love In the first place Says that the most Intimate form of love Talking about a sexual love It's between one man And one woman Only in the bonds Of marriage And it's meant For a lifetime And anybody who works In our schools Our jails They would tell you That so much Of the chaos The hurt The trauma They deal with Is because God's Design for relationships Has not been followed And church Can I Can I As your pastor Who is far from perfect Who is so grateful For the grace of God That forgives Every dumb thing That I do Can I speak

Some important words To us today Even the church The redeemed In Christ Are often Ignoring How God Has designed That relationship To work And what I try To get across In premarital counseling And I'm not sure I always do But I try Is this If you expect God's blessings Over your marriage You can't live Like the world You can't do Your relationship Like the world And expect Those blessings Now in verse 44 Jesus gets real practical He essentially says Hey you've been taught Wrong But then he says But I tell you But I tell you And remember He's God He has the authority To speak this truth That is already All throughout scripture Two things Love your enemy And pray for those Who persecute you This means that love Is More than a feeling More than a feeling

Okay that's enough Thank you Boston By the way But it's true Although there are Emotions attached Love is more than a feeling Because I'll guarantee If you picture those faces Of those

enemies Your feelings Won't want to love them In fact When I was working Through this message Picturing my own people Okay My own people That I've Probably hated And have seen As enemies In my life As I was working Through this myself I gotta tell you Some junk Came welling up In my heart In my mind And I had to choose Only by the Holy Spirit's power No I'm not gonna go there I wanna love my enemies I wanna pray for those Who've hurt me While also realizing That you know what I've probably done Some hurting too And I may be In somebody else's mind You know One of the most Powerful stories I've ever heard of this Came from a Dutch Christian Named Corrie Ten Boom During World War II

Along with her Father and sister She was a 51 year old adult At the time She was put in A concentration camp For hiding Jews There she watched Her dad and her sister Suffer and die And while she Also suffered But she ended up Living And one day Years after the war She was speaking On forgiveness In a church in Germany And as a man Came up to her Right away His wicked face Was seared In her mind It brought back Painful memories As anger Welled up Inside of her And he introduced Himself as a guard At the very Concentration camp That she was at Obviously He didn't remember her But his face And the wicked Things he did Were seared in her mind But she mentally As she mentally Relived the cruel Things he did To her And to so many others That's when he said These words I've become a Christian Now And I've received God's grace And I want to ask you Just like I did To God I want to ask you As a victim Of my cruelty To please Please Forgive me And you know what She said she didn't Want to Everything Inside of her He has his hand Extended He's waiting for her To shake his hand And she said I didn't want to Shake his hand Everything inside of me Was angry And I wanted to Lash out And all those Memories came Flooding back And then she remembered But God You have forgiven me More than I could Ever forgive anyone else And she said In her mind In that split second She chose to forgive And it's like The love of Christ Washed over her As she Shook his hand And just felt This complete peace At what God Had just done In her life And I love Her quote She said You never So touch The ocean Of God's love

[18:38] As when you Forgive And you love Your enemies But I get it It's hard It's very hard So whatever it is That you and I Are carrying today As painful as it is And I'm Listen I'm not making Light of it We are still Called to forgive We are still Called to love Our enemies And verse 45 Tells us Why As hard as it is We do that That you may be Children of your Father in heaven So the world Can see the love And the power Of God Working through you So the world Can see that you Are changed 1 Peter 2 9 from the New living Translation Says But you are Not like that Talking about You are not Like those Who are lost For you Are a chosen People You are Royal priests A holy nation God's very own Possession As a result You can show Others The goodness Of God For he Called you Out of darkness Into his

Wonderful light So ask the Lord to give you The courage When it's not Easy And if Reconciliation Needs to happen Listen Let's allow The Holy Spirit To lead that We can even Start that Process of Praying For whoever That person Is Every single Day Because it's Hard to hate Someone When you know They are made In the image Of God One Number two That Jesus Died for them As well And number three When you're Praying for them It's really Hard to hate On them And that Ushers us Right into Our second Point Christ-like Love Transforms Your enemy Into a Neighbor Man It transforms Your enemy Into a Neighbor See in Luke chapter 10 Jesus tells The parable Of the good Samaritan Where an Expert in the Law asked Him what He must Do to Obtain Eternal Life And Jesus Brilliantly Answers this Question With a Question back To him That took Him back To the Scripture And the Guy who Knows the Law well Responds By saying We'll love The Lord Your God With all Your heart And with All your Soul And with All your Mind And with All your Strength And love Your neighbor As yourself And Jesus Says Do that And you Will live And then The guy Says Who is My neighbor And this Prompts Jesus to Tell this Story It's about A man Who was Going from Jerusalem To Jericho When robbers Attacked him Beating him Stripping him Of his clothes Taking his Money Leaving him Half dead On the side Of the road The first Two people To see him Are religious Leaders A priest And then A Levite Who was Often an Assistant To the Priest And both Who came Along Separately For whatever Reason Ignore this Man who Is dying And they Keep going The third Man is A Samaritan And if you Understand the History Of Israel And the History of This region That means That the Samaritan Was half Jewish The Jews In Jesus' Day Because they Were half Breeds In their Eyes I know That's Derogatory But that's How they Saw them But in Jesus' Day They considered Them half

Breeds They treated Them terribly Like they Were dogs Because they Were only Half Jewish They Wouldn't Go through Their land They wanted Nothing to Do with Getting close To them Hatred And prejudice Spewed All over The place And yet The Samaritan Is the one Who sees This man Who has Compassion Who treats His wounds Bandages Him up And next He puts Him on His own Donkey Takes him To an Inn Where he Gives the Innkeeper Two denarii What would Be probably A couple Days wage For the Average worker And then He tells Him When I Return I'll pay You anything Else That you Need to Care for This man And then Jesus looks

At this Expert in The law And he Says Well which One of These three Men Was a Neighbor To him Well Duh The Samaritan And then Jesus says Then Go and Do Likewise In other Words The man In this Story He's Looked Down Upon Who's Hated He's The one Who doesn't Hold the Grudge He's The one Who loves The man That could Have been His Enemy And what I want You to See Is that The love Of Christ Will transform Our hearts So deeply That enemies Fade And only Neighbors Remain As we Love With a Tenderness That only Comes from Christ A supernatural Love That the Holy Spirit Enables In us As we Trust His Leading Look Back With me At our Main Passage In Matthew 5 Starting In Verse 46 Jesus Says This He says If you Love Those Who Love You What Reward Will You Get Are

[23 : 40] Not Even The tax Collectors Doing That And If You Greet Only Your People What Are You Doing More Than Others! Do Not Even The Pagans Do That See You Could Look Back The History Of The World Hitler Is Probably The One Who Comes To Our Mind First Right And You Would See Him Love Family Members And Others Who Loved Him If You Just Love The People You See Eye To Eye With That Means That You're Normal If You Just Love Your Family That's Great But There's A lot Of People In This Lost World Who Do The Same Thing As Well But As A Follower Of Christ You Are Called To So Love Your Enemies That You Make Them Your Neighbors And The World Stops In Its Tracks To See A Different Level Of Love That It Can't Comprehend Church I'll Never Forget Years Ago I Asked A Man I Deeply Respect Why He Loved And Treated His Parents With The Upmost

Respect Doing So Many Things For Them When He Had A Very Rough Childhood They Did Not Always Treat Him Very Well And That's When He Looked At Me And He Said If I Treated Them Just Like They Treated Me That Would Make Me Just Like And I've Never Forgotten Those Powerful Words And Yet I Need Us To Understand Something Loving Your Enemy Into A Neighbor Does Not Mean That You Have To Keep Enduring Abuse Or Putting Up With Toxic Behavior You Can Forgive You Can Love And You Can Still Protect Yourself And Your Family From Harmful Behavior I Can Tell You That I Have People In My Life That I Try And I

Love Now When You Read That Do You Say Yeah No Problem I've Heard Hundreds If Not Thousands Of Sermons I Can Be Perfect Right No I Doubt It Or Else There's Really Probably No Humility None Of Us Are Perfect And I Believe The Purpose Of That Statement Was To Prepare Them For The Cross That Would Come Because As Jesus Is Speaking This He Obviously Had Not Gone Of

The Cross That Call To Perfection Should Make Us Say Wow Jesus I Can't Be Perfect As You Are Perfect And He Responds Basically By Saying I Know But I Did It For You See Jesus Lived A Perfect Sinless Life Going To The Cross He Didn't Deserve The Cross He Didn't Deserve At All To Pay The Price That Our Sins Demand See This Passage Today Was Tough Only By His Strength Through The Holy Spirit Can We Love Our Neighbors And Love Our Enemies With That Kind Of Love So The Invitation Today Depends On Where You Are With Jesus If You Have Repented Of Your Sins Surrendering All To His Lordship If You Been Baptized Into Him Filled With The Holy Spirit If That Is You And You A Child Of God Then This Passage Is A Reminder Calling You Back Calling Me Back To The Cross To Find The Strength The Supernatural Strength To Love The Way You Are Called To Love You Don't Have To Do This In Your Own Power He

Wants To Empower You To Love And Impact This World For His Kingdom And Then For Those Maybe Who Never Repented Of Their Sin Surrendering Their Hearts To Christ This Passage Beckons Us To The Cross To Discover His Love His Forgiveness His Hope Purpose And Life That's Only Found In Jesus Because Listen You Can't Love Your Enemy You Absolutely Will Not Be Able To Do It Without The Transforming Love Of Christ As A Part Of Your Daily Life So Let Me End This Message Today With These Holy Spirit Led Words Or Definition Of Love That The Apostle Paul Shared In 1 Corinthians 13 And I'll Tell You What These Words Are Powerful As You Live This Out You Can Turn That Enemy Into A Neighbor Here's What Paul Said Love Is Patient Love Is Kind

It Does Not Envy It Does Not Boast It

[29 : 05] Is Not Proud It Does Not Dishonor Others It Is Not Self Seeking It Is Not Easily Angered It Keeps No Record Of Wrongs Love Does Not Delight In Evil But It Rejoices With The Truth It Always Protects Always Trusts Always Hopes Always Perseveres And Then He Ends This Way Love Never Fails Pray With Me Heavenly Father We Are Just So Grateful For Your Incredible Love That You Lavish Over Us And We Just Thank You For Your Word Today Let That Truth Pierce Our Hearts Name Amen Hey This Morning I Want To Give You This Quick Invitation If You Got Questions About Your Faith If You Want To Talk About Giving Your Life To Jesus Reach Out To Us 812 663 8488 That's 812 663 8488 And Hey We Hope That You Have A Fantastic Week