

An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for February 12, 2023

6th Sunday after Epiphany

Lectionary Year A

Scripture: [Matthew 5:21-37](#) [**Summary:** *Jesus Teaches His Disciples What NOT To Do*]

Supplies Needed: No supplies are needed.

ASK (a.k.a. [The On-Ramp](#))

- Good morning!
- Can you tell me what were some of your first words that you ever said? [*wait for responses, if there are any*]
- Maybe it was Ma-ma or Da-da?
- You also probably learned to say the word “No” pretty early on as well.
- Did you know that the word “No” is often the first word that many of us first learn to say?
- One of the reasons we learn the word “No” so quickly is because we hear it a lot as we’re first learning about the world and how to move through it.
- I mean, it’s possible that your parents will *sometimes* still say that word to you, right?

TELL (a.k.a. [The Freeway](#))

- I bring this up because Jesus is telling his disciples “No” about certain things in today’s scripture story.
- But, what he’s saying “No” to might surprise us.
- He tells the disciples, “No” to being so angry that they can’t or won’t forgive a person.
- He tells them “No” to wanting something so badly that they stop being thankful for the things that they have.
- He tells them “No” to leaving friendships so that they can be friends with other people.

- He tells them “No” to trying to get people to believe their words. Instead, their yes should just be “yes” and their no should just be “no.”

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- So...let me repeat what Jesus was teaching his disciples, but in the form of one long question:
Would *you* want to learn from someone who calls you names, insults you, is so angry at you that they can't forgive you, stops being friends with you to be friends with other people, but then tries really hard to make you think that what they have to say is really important?
 - Would you even *listen* to that person?
- No way, right!?
- Which is why Jesus is telling his disciples to not do those things – because he wants people to be able to hear what the disciples have to say.
- Jesus wants the invitation to live God's better way to be heard.
- And guess what? At least some of the disciples listened to Jesus!
- We know that the disciples listened because we're still talking about Jesus' instructions today – 2000 years later!
- And, in the same way Jesus instructions worked for the disciples, they can work for us, too.
- By encouraging others with our words, by forgiving others, and by sharing God's love with the people around us, we can show others what God's better way looks like - just like Jesus and the disciples did.
- And that is the good news for today.
- Let's pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God...

Dear God...

Thank you for Jesus...

Thank you for Jesus...

...who teaches us...

...who teaches us...

...how to live your better way.

...how to live your better way.

Thank you and Amen.