

THIS COMMAND I GIVE YOU TO “LOVE ONE ANOTHER”

Some years back we were sitting around the kitchen table just visiting about the past. One of the ladies began complaining about how she had been treated and was so angry that she made the statement that she would “Never forgive or forget” the person who had done this to her. The discussion came around to how Jesus has forgiven us. With repentance of our sins we are forgiven. Well, she said “I’ll forgive him, but I will never forget.

It reminded me of the time where one of my employers insisted I move to St. Louis to continue working for them, even though I was promised when I was hired that I could always work out of my home in Grafton. Let me tell you that I developed such a hate for that man that I wound up sleeping on a heating pad because of back pain and took medication to settle my stomach.

We heard a sermon on the subject of forgiveness and the pastor was talking about the maladies a person can get for not letting go of hate! I was having some of what he was talking about. So right then and there I decided to not only forgive my ex-boss, but to also forget (that took longer). I started feeling better within days.

We are reminded of the passage where we are told when we repent of our sins and Jesus forgives us and these sins are no longer remembered by God. We are told that they are scattered as far as the east is from the west.

There is at least one more thing that hate can cause. Ungratefulness! It has to be very difficult to feel grateful about any of the many blessings that we receive each day from our loving Father’s bountiful hand. What happens, inside us, we concentrate on the hate so much that we forget about anything good in our lives.

So, one solution that I have personally tried is to put my hurts and hates in our Lord’s hands and leave it there. I made up a stack of 3x5 cards and on each one I wrote something I was thankful for each day. Every morning I would go through the list of cards one by one and thank God. As I thought of something new that I was thankful for, I would make up a new card and add it to the stack. If you should try this, in a short time, you will be happier and at ease about your life.

As for the person we began this greeting with, as time went by she didn’t mention the incident again, so maybe she forgot about this! Just maybe she let the Lord work in her heart through His word and sacrament.

In our day we hear so much hate, demonstration, twisting the truth and outright lies. It is so important that we don’t let this affect us that we would stop loving one another. The Lord tells in 1John, this command I give you “That you love one another.”

