

Draft transcription from audio – Sermon for Sep 6, 2020 / Juan Carlos La Puente

Dear friends in this shared journey.

We are responsible to discern wisdom from chapter 18, a beautiful chapter the community of Matthew shared with us.

I want to share three things related to it.

The first one is about when somebody causes us damage.

It is not about revenge, it is about correction. It is about caring, it is about heartfelt caring. It is about how to get them back into the path of love, helping them move from fear to courageous love.

So that's the first thing that I would like to explore with you and discern wisdom about that. Then, the second thing is that I want all of you to remember a moment in which somebody corrects us very well. What were the qualities of that kind of correction? How did they help us to get back into the path of our integrity, in tune with our deep aspirations, to our integrity? And the third thing in these difficult times that we are living is that life is calling us to make peace with nature, to get back into harmony, to get back into balance. So, who can correct us about this? And who can help us about this?

Okay, these three things I want to explore together right now.

The first thing is about when somebody causes us damage.

We need to remember that we rely on the love of other people. I want you to remember when you were born and you were growing. You were learning and many people were taking care of you.

I have an example. When my niece Ximena, the daughter of my brother,... when she was very little she was trying to touch my face with love playing with my beard time ago, and I remember my sister in law telling me 'Juan Carlos, even though she's causing you damage' -because she was doing something but not so gentle- 'she is learning. She is just a baby... she is learning.'

So, I realized that I needed to suffer her learning until she can learn how she can touch me with love. And I think many people around us have been suffering our learning since we were children. Just think about how many people were cleaning our diapers when we were very little. So, not only when we were babies but all our life, we are learning. And this is a communal effort that each of us has been learning, people have been supporting us; people have been suffering sometimes our learning.

So, It is not about revenge, it is about correction. Remember that you have been relying on many people to support your learning. So, be compassionate, we need to be compassionate with people. Even though they are causing us damage, we know that we all rely on one another, and we need to support one another to correct each other instead of destroying.

That will be the first thing I want you to think about it, and then the second thing is that we ask ourselves -What are the good qualities of a correction?

I remember a friend -Maritze- time ago. She helped me tremendously.

The way she corrected me was about calling myself to be loyal to my heart. So she remember things that I had said. She remembered actions, I have done. She remember all of those things, and she said 'Juan Carlos, remember when you had said this or that last year?' 'Remember what you have done two years ago? This is not what you really are, just be loyal to your heart. She highlighted aspects of my life that were supporting me to get me into the path again.

Sometimes, when we correct other people because they are causing us damage or causing damage to other people, we want to correct them from a different ground from themselves. Our correction need to be grounded into themselves. So, the people who are the closest ones to those who are causing other people damage or causing us damage are more equipped to correcting them. The closest ones can remember good things about the people they want to correct.

So, correction requires remembering and love. More love, then more legitimacy to correct other person. So that's something very important and the ground to correct the person is about remembering good things about the person that can help the person as a resource to realize that the person can get back into the path again of integrity and love. So, sometimes we want to correct, but we are not exactly the one that the person needs, and we know who are the closest one to this person who may help the person to understand and to get in tune with what the inner self of this person is.

So that will be the second thing.

And the third thing I said, ... in this time of suffering, tremendous suffering, when many people are dying... Life is calling us to a balance, to get back into harmony, to make peace with nature, not to destroy. Systems in which we are leaving are destroying nature and are causing all this disproportional damage. It seems like nature is reacting in different ways. And we need to respond to get into balance and harmony with nature. How? Who can do this? How we can correct us to do this?

So, I think the gospel, the good news put light into us to reflect and tell us 'you have good things, remember you can. We need to have faith in one another if we support one another. ... This is a treasure that we have.'

I heard around me sad news like this one 'you are an individual. You need to be close to people who dominate others if you want to survive. And about those who are weak, and about those who are annihilated... You do not need to remember them. You just need to compete, and you're alone.'

This is the very hard environment that we live in.

And we need to remember the good news: 'we are not an individual, we are a human-nature collective effort, an expression of many people. As I said at the beginning, people have been carrying us, supporting us. We have been relying on the love of people when we are learning. Each of us is a collective human effort. We are not alone. We are supported by many people, we are a communion.' Likewise, Jesus teaches us that we don't need to be close to those who dominate others. We need to be close to the pain of others who are crying out publicly that society needs to change and to overcome the pain. So, it's about... rather than being close to those who are causing damage by dominion, we need to

be close to those who are at risk of being eliminated by society, those who are close to the pain, crying out for a change. And we want to be with them, we want to weave communion with them. And something else that we can remember now from Jesus is that we can always get back into the path of courageous love, moving from fear to courageous love, but together.

This is why Jesus told Thomas 'Touch my wounds, touch my wounds. I'm the resurrected one.' That means that we do not deny the pain that people are crying out publicly,... we want to touch one another in those difficult situations, but we know that from there we can support one another to change and overcome that type of pain. So I think that we can make peace with nature remembering the gospel.

And I just want to finish remembering the three things I just told you. And I need to remember these three things.

The first one is not about revenge. It's about correction. Second, the closest people who love the person are the most supported by life to correct the person, and those who want to correct others need to remember what are the good aspects of what the person has said or done in the past that may help the person as a resource to move them from fear to courageous love. And the third one is about that we can get back into the path of harmony if we remember that we are not alone, we are a communal effort, if we walk close to people who are sharing their painful wounds publicly, so we can respond alongside them, and we can weave relationship with them, so we can all together recreate our life.

Thank you very much for listening about this topic.