

Love keeps no record of wrongs

See service sheet online at www.knbc.org

Welcome

Opening Scripture

Hymn: Redeemed Fanny Crosby (on Service sheet)

Bible Reading: Ps 32

Prayer: Adoration and praise.

Communion prep

Communion

Main reading: Matt 18:21-35, 1 Cor 13:4-8a

Hymn: Hallelujah Crown of thorns (on Service sheet)

Sermon **Love keeps no record of wrongs**

Hymn MP 181 God forgave my sin in Jesus Name

Close -----

Listen to today's sermon by clicking on the link at www.knbc.org.

The audio file is [21_05_02.mp3](#).

“It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.” (1Co 13:5 NIV)

**Welcome and pray**

I normally start with an illustration that attempts to set the scene for the message. Today it is not difficult to find one. I have to look no further than..

Meghan and Harry's interview with Oprah Winfrey. The audience got what they wanted, juicy tit bits about life in the Royal family. This was the interview in which the couple made accusations of ...A,B,C. I won't mention them! It made for TV at its best – or worst. It was the “let me tell you what” a list of the failings of others. Lapped up, swathes of the US thought it was great, so also in the UK and elsewhere in the world.

But God's word says **“love keeps no record of wrongs** x2 had no-one told her? It was watched by 12.4m in the UK over half the viewers, it was watched by 17.8 million in the US which is we are told:

“In an era when many people are making their own TV schedules, reaching that kind of live audience is unusual unless it is a big sporting event.”

■ US research organization Nielsen said *“it had the largest audience for any prime-time entertainment special so far this television season.”*

Notice the word ‘entertainment’ airing the sins of others is ‘entertainment’. How people love it. It has been watched by nearly 50m worldwide and is still available on streaming platforms.

But God's word says **“love keeps no record x2 of wrongs**

The more I read this passage on love the more I see it stand against the inclinations of my own heart. And the more I see it stand against how the world works. After all, didn't Meghan do just what many do?

But Meghan was not escaping captivity from some Junta engaged in evil practice that needed confronting.

■ This is not exposing a national malpractice like the blanket issue of DNR There is a place for that. There is a place for bringing the perpetrator of crimes to justice for war crimes and so on.

But this ugly desire to search out the failings of others is something quite different - It is in the area of personal relationships. Her family.

✚ The devil loves to see us maximize the failings of others

Q - How much time did Meghan spend talking about her own failings?

Could she have not kept it within the family and spoken to them first?

Meghan rather used her position to - tell as many people as possible - as publically as possible, - with Oprah Winfrey as prominently as possible – at the best time slot possible – and the whole world was invited to tune in. The Queen’s response was characteristically wise - “We will resolve this privately”

Finding fault with others has become the norm in our post Christian society. On every level you see it, from top to bottom

- Politics is all about finding fault with others, What is it this week: Cummings publishing text messages and emails to what end? - to help or hinder?

It’s hypocrisy. Dominic Cummings, Meghan, have you not done the same? Look into your life and we won’t have to go far. Those who point the finger forget that everyone, all of us, - are sinners - everyone has skeletons in the cupboard if you just look.

We are a fault finding society which likes to point the finger and expose the failings of others – expecting a high standard of them - while excusing myself. It produces a miserable “catch you out” mentality.

Q. When on TV or in the press will we hear a politician say of another (not in the same party) “well done”, “well done”.

Sometimes interviewers ask “isn’t there anything they have done well?” Could the response not be “I don’t agree with the approach generally, but there are some things that have been done well, and are good. Yes”

You never hear it! If only our leaders set an example.

But they are like us – it’s the same everywhere.

- Last week with those convicted of stealing from the post office a lady said: “I will never forgive them” and she actually started by saying “I am a forgiving person but...” “I will never forgive them” why not?

Stand outside a court and that is just what you regularly hear people say.

Holding grudges is keeping a record of wrongs.

- ✚ Carrying a grudge, being unwilling to forgive the faults of others puts one of life’s heaviest burdens on your own back.

TV discussion title: “Is gossip getting you down?” with comments like “My ex-wife’s gossip is making me miserable” ...

- “My husband’s ex-wife is ruining my marriage”. Recording wrong and telling tales is corrosive and divisive. I didn’t stick around

A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends. Pr 16:28

Yes in the family:

- How often have I heard people say “Mum and I are not talking, Dad and I are not talking. A brother sister. - “How long with this go on for” I ask?
- In damaged marriages you see the finding - and collecting of faults. This is why the law commission want to make divorce easier. Not a good idea.
- ‘A’ gives a list of the failings of B. B gives a list of failings of A. No mention of their own fault. I say “is it really 100% their fault”? There’s a hesitation “well maybe not exactly 100%”. So I say “you start to work on your part in this” and we will see what we can do with theirs.

What do you choose to say about another? God’s way of love is to minimize the failings of others. We are to love our neighbour, and as love wants the best for them, how can we “**keep a record of their wrongs?**”

The word **record** is λογίζομαι logizomai (log-id’-zom-ay) in other words make a log, a list, a record of sins,

- ✚ How is your record collection?? Lots of old stuff there?

5 (ASV) **take** not account of evil; CEVAus **It doesn’t keep a record of wrongs that others do.** (NAS) **does not take into account a wrong suffered,** (Philips) **It does not keep account of evil.** Message **Doesn’t keep score of the sins of others,**

No Christian, no-one who professes to follow Christ should do this. This is not how we as Christians are to be. Sadly last week we looked at women in the church in Crete who were giving in to slander and gossip.

When you see the errors of others, and it is easy to them, do not record them do not mentally write them down. – or even actually write them down.

- The previous pastor said there was a lady once in an argument literally reeled off a long list of things the other had done.

“Oh I would never do that” I hear you say. But are things logged in your mind? Stored up like ammunition for the gun ready to be loaded and fired off in the heat of battle? That is one of the arguments against the gun law, if you have a gun in the heat of the moment it comes out. So don’t have a gun!

This natural desire to see the failings of other while being blinded to my own goes back to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Adam and Eve when challenged about their disobedience did not want to own up but rather shifted the blame, their failure onto someone else. In a perverted way seeing another's fault makes me feel better, - and elevated.

The pattern is set with Adam and Eve's first two children. When Cain murdered his brother Abel it laid out the new relation of hate. Not love but hate. This has become man's essential relationship ever since.

If the ship is sinking and there is only one lifebelt - I will take it.

✚ Find fault with another and it authenticates my desire to hate, "yes they are at fault!" So I legitimise my reason to hate my fellow man. We don't think 'hate' but that is what it is.

"Lord help me with my hateful heart Put your love in my heart so I will never **keeps a record of the wrongs** of others."

- Some years ago a man came to consider being a pastoral assistant at KNBC. In discussion I asked him about his previous church. He explained some grievance/dispute. He told me the gist of it and said "I have all the emails I can show you". "Delete them" x2 Later he rang up, and to his credit, said he had.

What have you kept?? - I need to think what I have kept.

Beware of the 'deleted item' snare. You delete an email, but it is not really deleted - it is just moved, it can be brought back. So with sin, my sin and the sins of others, you move it away, but not too far, it is still within reach, just in case. On my PC it is to press 'shift delete' and the question comes up *Do you want to permanently delete this item?* It is can be a very hard thing to do! Do I really never want to see it again?

- I have a file of church business. This has been a prompt for me to go through and delete old emails that have anything of this in them.

So keep short accounts. Every morning as you wake up and come before the Lord and as you pray for each of us here, - ask the question:

Is there something I'm holding against that person, kept for a future day?

✚ They say: Grudges are like babies, the more you nurse them the bigger they grow.

Picture a scene, you are having an argument, I know you would never dream of it – but say you did with someone, what other things would you bring up? Say something has caused a tension - what other things would you bring up? No Christian should ever do that – please forgive me if I have done so with you. A Christian must never do it because God does not do it with us x2

God has cleared my guilt - how can I hang on to the guilt of others?

We are told that in Christ God is reconciling sinners to himself, **not counting men's sins against them. 2Co 5:19.**

The scapegoat sent into the wilderness the hands put on the sins on the goat and then give a sharp boot to the rear he runs off into the desert never to be seen again. My sin has gone and remembered no more.

as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. Ps 103:12 He distances my sins – so far - from himself.

In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back. Isa 38:17 My sin out of sight and hidden.

✚ God hides my sin, God covers over my sin. **Blots out** ps 51:9, God casts my sins to the bottom of the sea and then puts a sign saying "no fishing"

"I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." Jer 31:34 (quoted in Heb 10:17) God keeps no record of wrongs

If God is willing to do that for me, how can I hold onto the sin of others?

"Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. There is a direct connection between how I treat others and how God will treat me.

... For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." Mt 6:12-15

In a moment we will sing: "God forgave my sin in Jesus' name." and the chorus "He said 'Freely, freely you have received;, freely, freely give."

The Arabic version reads, "Love **remembers not evil**"; having once forgiven it, I think of it no more; I do not meditate revenge, nor devise mischief, nor contrive evil against the one who has done evil to me, as Esau did against his brother Jacob.

Finally - We do not keep a record because we do not want to keep a record

You have heard some translations, hear some more: (EMTV) **thinks no evil; does not imagine evil; is not reckoning, nor brood over wrongs.** Or (Williams) **it never harbors evil thoughts; Darby does not impute evil,**

John Trapp the Anglican puritan Bible commentator (1601-1669) translates it **Thinketh no evil** saying we must not be suspicious, or meditate revenge.

For example; When David sent a delegation to the Ammonites they assumed they came with a bad motive, **the Ammonite nobles said to Hanun their lord, "Do you think David is honouring your father by sending men to you to express sympathy? Hasn't David sent them to you to explore the city and spy it out and overthrow it?"** (2Sa 10:3) No he hadn't!

"I know full well what you are thinking, the schemes by which you would wrong me." (Job 21:27) Do you Job? In fact he had enough to go on!

But there is only one who truly knows my heart and your heart, the Lord Jesus. **"Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts?"** Mt 9:4. For us – who do not know – we must not then guess. Not only will we guess wrong - but our tendency is to think the worst and unfairly attribute an evil intent.

Love thinks no evil. Means it does not cherish malice, it is never mischievous, nor inclined to revenge; it does not suspect evil of others, charge guilt upon them by inference and *innuendo*.

The answer? All ways assume the best. It does not mean we throw wisdom out of the window and naively believe the serial liar, we need wisdom. We will come to this when we look at **love always trusts**. The point is a generous heart will always try to seek the best in the situation – not the worst

God's way of love is to cover over an offense. We have had this before **"He who covers over an offence promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends."** Pr 17:9 That is the way to love others.

"A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offence." Pr 19:11

✚ **And if we are to do that, then do not record it, do not keep it for later!**

We have just had communion. It is a chance to press the reset button, to confess, to be clean and free from hindrances, to empty the "deleted items"

Here we as Christians make a public witness, a public stand, that we love each other the way Christ loves us. Those around may bear grudges, record wrongs and find fault but not Christ's Holy redeemed people.

Get rid of that book, clear the log, it will honour God who has done that for you. It is good for them – and it will be good for you.

My mother's memory is not good. She quick forgets, and we have to same conversation again – and again! It makes you appreciate having memory. Yet there is a positive side. If there is an upset it is quickly forgotten. A major disappointment such as the family cannot visit, all is soon fine, she doesn't remember. And when she speaks it is never brought up.

✚ **How is your memory – the answer is - it depends!**

While it is hard to cover over someone else's failing we must develop a selective amnesia - selective memory. **Will you remember what is good and forget what is bad?** Not to do this, or do the reverse, and you will destroy Christian fellowship, dishonour God and produce bitterness in yourself.

Let us seek the Lord's grace, his power in this most difficult area. Oh what a world of evil is stored in the human heart, "Lord fill my mind with your word so I know, Lord fill my heart with your Grace so I will only do what pleases you - and that I will want to"

✚ **"To will is of nature, to will aright is of grace" says Augustine.**

"Lord give me love for my brother and sister, help me see them as once broken image-bearers of God now reborn and being renewed by your HS."

✚ **Jonathan Lamb said the importance of "learning to reason from the top down" Let us do that. See things – and people - from a Godward view.**

Book vividly laying bare the experiences of British soldiers in Afghanistan. The traumas of sudden explosions and death. Coming home and finding petty squabbles in the supermarket over who has the last chocolate bunny. See the big picture of Christ's amazing sacrifice to save me from Judgment and eternal hell. Just think of that Judgment, what a great salvation! I am now completely forgiven of everything - and will be in heaven forever.

If Christ has done this for me then I must truly love my brother and sister. I must forgive whatever grievance I have. No more storing up - rather as Christ has done for me draw a veil over the sins of others. "Lord help me in this, Lord help me". Amen _____END