Study

*(Weekly Readings that are related to the sermon theme)*

* **Monday Exodus 34:7**
* **Tuesday Deuteronomy 24:16**
* **Wednesday Ezekiel 18:19-20**
* **Thursday Numbers 14:18**
* **Friday Exodus 20:1-26**
* **Saturday John 9:1-3**

*The word of God is living and active sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

**Hebrews 4:12**

Meditate

What are the top three pieces of baggage that you carry? When did you start to carry them?

How can our baggage be viewed as an idol? Where in your life does your gut respond from your baggage instead of God?

How are we defined by the baggage we carry?

What is the one piece of baggage you do not want anybody to touch…especially God?

Do you trust God to take care of your baggage his way? Are you willing to hand it over?

*Loving God, I have held on to so much baggage for so long. Most of the time I make excuses for it, and even let it affect my life. I know you have a better plan so today I hand my baggage to you. Do what you will to straighten me up so that I can serve and reflect you better. In Jesus’ Name, Amen*

*I’m unswervingly loyal to the thousand who love me and keep my commandments.*

~Exodus 20:6

March 9, 2014

**Welcome To The Baggage Check**

**Baggage:** past experiences or long-held ideas regarded as burdens and impediments.

1. Our baggage goes with us everywhere and affects everything in our lives.
2. We define ourselves according to the baggage we carry.

*Don’t bow down to them or serve them...* **Exodus 20:5**

1. We don’t like to have our baggage inspected.

*…I’m a most jealous God…* **Exodus 20:5**

1. God has a plan for the baggage you carry, but do you trust him?

*I’m unswervingly loyal to the thousands who love me and keep my commandments.* **Exodus 20:6**

Study

*(Weekly Readings that are related to the sermon theme)*

* **Monday Ephesians 4:31-32**
* **Tuesday Matthew 6:14-15**
* **Wednesday Hebrews 12:14-15**
* **Thursday Romans 12:17-21**
* **Friday Ephesians 4:26**
* **Saturday James 1:26**

*The word of God is living and active sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

**Hebrews 4:12**

Meditate

With whom do you harbor bitterness in your heart?

What are your thoughts on forgiving the person who has wronged you?

Take some time to meditate on all the things that God could hold against you. What does that debt look like?

Do you expect that God will be merciful?

How do you respond to God forgiving us the same way that we forgive others?

*Lord, someone has wronged me. You saw it when it happened and I have not been able to let go. It feels impossible to forgive them and it is eating me up inside. Lord, I forgive them, just as you forgive me. Their sin has no more power over me, and from this day on I only want to live in your peace and grace. In Jesus Name, Amen.*

*Not seven times, but seventy-seven times.*

~Matthew 18:22

March 16, 2014

**Vintage Baggage**

1. Bitterness is a bag that is easiest to carry but is the most destructive.
2. Complete forgiveness of others is the only way to get rid of this bag.

*I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.*

**Matthew 18:22**

1. We owe an insurmountable debt to God.

*As he began settlement of his accounts, a man who owed him 10,000 bags of gold was brought to him.* **Matthew 18:24**

1. God will forgive us the same way we forgive others.

*This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.* **Matthew 18:35**

Study

*(Weekly Readings that are related to the sermon theme)*

* **Monday Proverbs 16:5**
* **Tuesday Proverbs 11:2**
* **Wednesday Proverbs 29:23**
* **Thursday Galatians 6**
* **Friday Proverbs 26:12**
* **Saturday Jeremiah 9**

*The word of God is living and active sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

**Hebrews 4:12**

Meditate

What expectations drive your daily life?

What are some heavy burdens that have been placed on you that you feel you should be recognized for?

How do you feel when people do not recognize you for the things that you do?

Where do you find you hope really?

What if no one ever recognized another thing you did? How can you encourage another person for the service?

*Father, there are days when I feel I am under appreciated and it hurts. You have been through the same thing. You came to serve, yet you were rejected. Even amidst my feeling of entitlement, may I be humble. I will serve without expectation of anything in return, even a thank you. At the end of the day I will do it for you and lean on your promise that you exalt the humble. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.*

*The greatest among you will be your servant.*

~Matthew 23:11

March 23, 2014

**Pretty Little Baggers**

1. Our lives are driven by expectations…

*They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to life a finger to move them.* **Matthew 23:4**

1. When we fulfill these expectations we want to be noticed and praised. (a.k.a. Pride)

*Everything is done for people to see…* **Matthew 23:5**

1. Our hope is in God alone.

*And do not call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have one Father and he is in heaven.* **Matthew 23:9**

1. Greatness comes through humility and service.

*The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.* **Matthew 23:11-12**

Study

*(Weekly Readings that are related to the sermon theme)*

* **Monday 1 Corinthians 10:1-13**
* **Tuesday Acts 8:9-25**
* **Wednesday Genesis 3**
* **Thursday 1 John 1**
* **Friday Romans 3:21-23**
* **Saturday Revelation 21:1-4**

*The word of God is living and active sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

**Hebrews 4:12**

Meditate

What are the secret sins that you try and keep hidden?

How has this shame affected your relationship with God and others?

On a scale of 1-10 how badly do you want to be rid of the secret shame in your life?

If you have found freedom from your sin through Christ, what is it like?

Do you spend time confessing your sin before God? If not...I recommend it.

*God I have been trying to hide certain things in my life for so long. Some things I have never really addressed but I continue to do them. I am broken before you God. As I confess I know you are faithful to forgive. I give over my sin to you and receive the freedom that come through the blood of your son Jesus.*

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins.*

~1 John 1:9

April 6, 2014

**The Hidden Pockets**

1. Shame is the result of our sin and we almost always try to keep it hidden.

*They heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid.* **Genesis 3:8**

1. Unaddressed shame promotes decay and separation from a God and others who loves us.

*If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth.* **1 John 1:6**

1. Jesus died for all sins so that we can have a repaired relationship with God

*But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all unrighteousness.* **1 John 1:7**

1. Confessing our sin releases us from the hold sin has on our lives.

*If we confess our sins he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.* **1 John 1:9**

Study

*(Weekly Readings that are related to the sermon theme)*

* **Monday 1 Thessalonians 5:18**
* **Tuesday 1 Peter 2:15**
* **Wednesday Proverbs 3:5-6**
* **Thursday Philippians 2:13**
* **Friday Romans 12:2**
* **Saturday John 6:38-40**

*The word of God is living and active sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

**Hebrews 4:12**

Meditate

What are some expectations that have led to strife in your life?

When is it easy for you to praise God?

When is it difficult to honor God? Why?

What has not worked out for you in life? What is it you felt like you deserved?

What will it take for you to leave this bag at the foot of the cross?

*Lord I confess that many times I have created expectations that reflect my own will for my life instead of yours. Forgive me for trying to control my life. I hand over control to you, because that is the only way that I will gain peace. I submit my life to your will. Your ways are not my ways, your thoughts are not my thoughts, they are so much greater. Take my life. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

*If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace…*

~Luke 19:42

April 11, 2014

**We Did Not Pack For This…**

1. When God meets our expectations it is easy for people to give Him praise.

*(They) began to praise God in loud voices for the miracles they had seen: Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!.* **Luke 19:38**

1. Our expectations blind us from what could give us peace.

*If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace-but now it is hidden from your eyes.* **Luke 19:42**

1. Ungodly expectations will lead to your downfall.

*They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls…because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.* **Luke 19:44**

1. Time to trade in your bags.