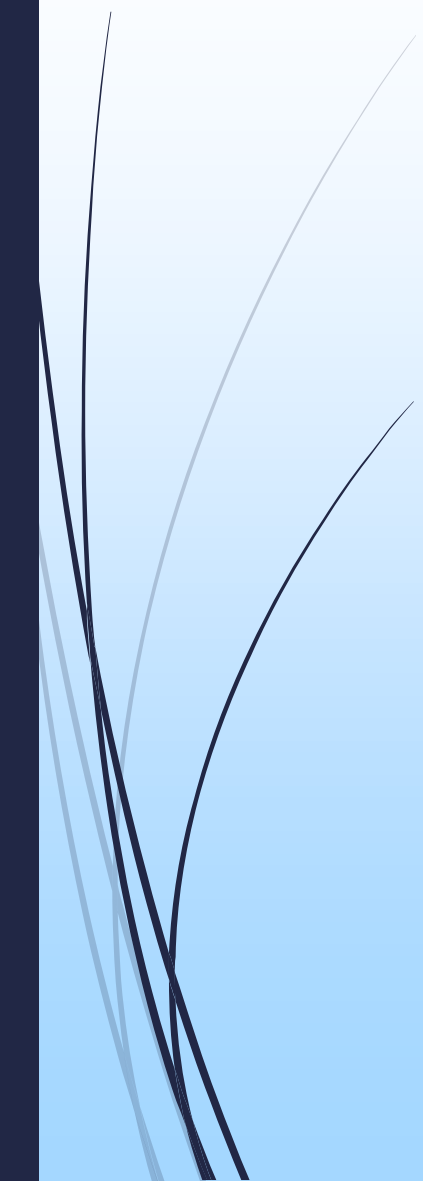




# **Winsome Community**

**Building Community by Hope**  
(Sunday morning)





# Two Questions

What is the Christian hope?

How does this hope show itself now?




## ***Romans 12:10, 14, 12-21***

*Outdo one another in showing honor... <sup>12</sup> Rejoice in hope...*

***14*** *Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them... <sup>17</sup>*

*Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup> If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup> Beloved,*



*never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." <sup>20</sup> To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." <sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*



# What is the Christian hope?

- Not just “hopefulness”
- Confidence that God himself will sort things out.

*v. 19: Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”*



# Christian hope (cont.)

v. 19: three words

- *vengeance*
- *mine*
- *beloved*



## Hope (cont.): *Vengeance*

Judicial punishment

Why we don't like the idea

- Imperfect justice
- Therapy thinking



# Hope (cont.): *Vengeance*

Good news

- Abusive authority
- Vindication





Hope (cont.): *mine*.

*Vengeance is mine says the Lord*





## Hope (cont.): *beloved*

*Beloved, never avenge  
yourselves...*

Good news for “Perps”

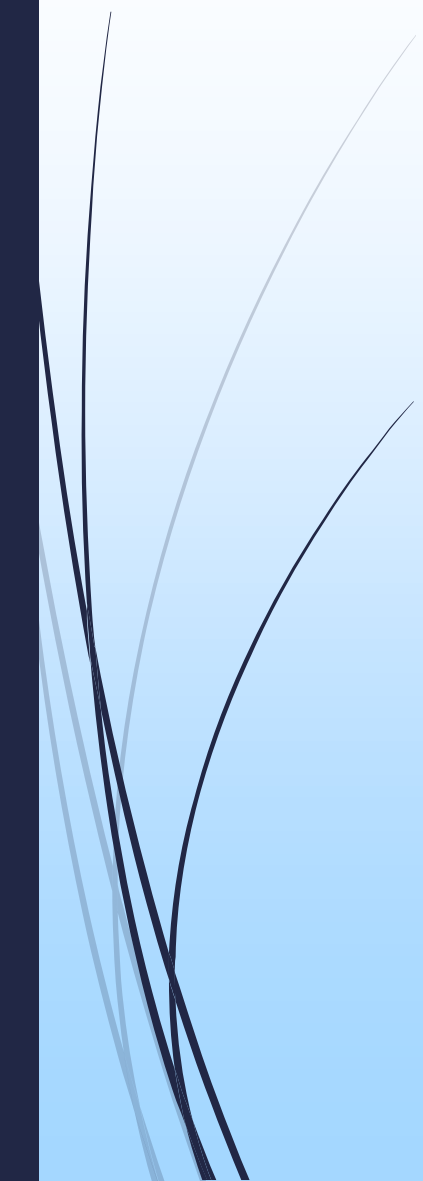

*Never repay evil with evil (v. 17)*



## Hope (cont.): *beloved*

### Edmund and Aslan

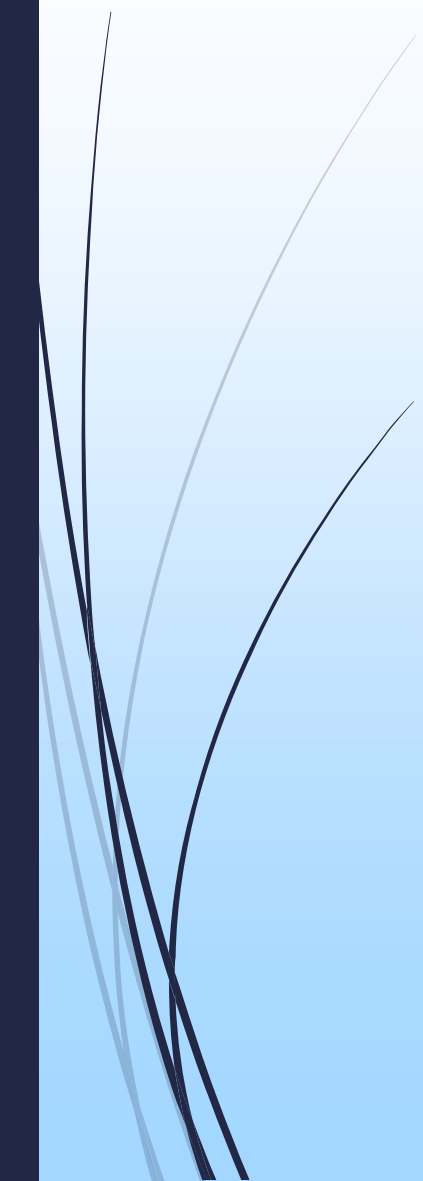
When the other children woke up the next morning, the first thing they heard was that their brother... was at the moment with Aslan. As soon as they had breakfasted they all went out, and there they saw Aslan and Edmund walking together in the



dewy grass, apart from the rest of the court. There is no need to tell you (and no one ever heard) what Aslan was saying, but it was a conversation which Edmund never forgot. As the others drew nearer Aslan turned to meet them, bringing Edmund with him.



# **Hope at work in our relationships to each other**

- Don't have to win
  - Catching each other doing the right thing
  - Going on the “love-offensive”
- 



# Hope at work: Don't have to win

*v. 19: Beloved never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God*

*Luke 22.63-64: Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him. They also blindfolded him and kept asking him, 'Prophecy! Who is it that struck you.'*



# **Don't have to win (cont.)**

Following Jesus:

We don't have to...

Letting things go:



# Catching each other doing the right thing.

*v. 10: Outdo one another in  
showing honor.*

No need to withhold kudos over  
mixed motives





# Going on the “love offensive”

*v. 14: Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them....*

*vv.20-21: To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.”<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*



## “Love offensive” (cont.)

Destroying as enemies **as enemies.**

Thinking of someone we are having issues with.

If you are both his *beloved* ones...



# Frederick Douglass and Thomas Auld

Open Letter (1848):

“I intend to make use of you as a weapon with which to assail the system of slavery...I entertain no malice toward you personally...There is no roof under which you would be more safe than mine, and there is nothing in my house which you might need for comfort, which I would not readily grant...I am your fellow man, but not your slave.”

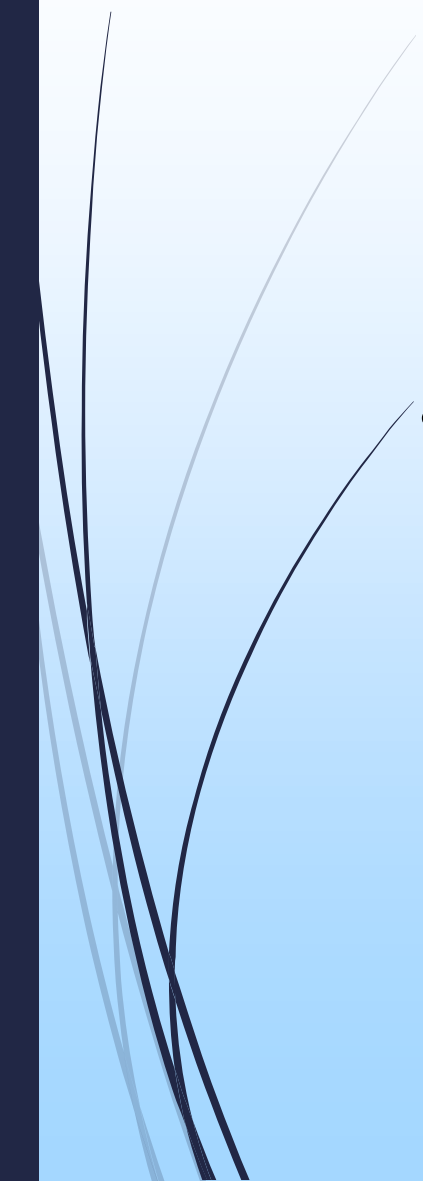



## **Douglass and Auld (cont.)**

Meeting in MD (c. 1875):

“They could not stop crying.

Douglass and Auld clasped hands and spoke of past and future, confronting death and reminiscing over their years of acquaintance and separation.” (Erin Blakemore)



*Christ [really] is in us, the hope of  
glory (Col. 1:27)*