



## *Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast*

*November 5, 2023*

*"A Path to Healing"*

*Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" (Matthew 18:21, NIV)*

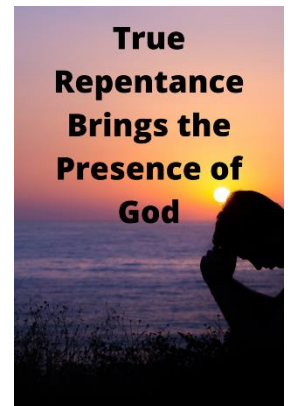
### **"They will know we are Christians by our love." (Is Love is All You Need?)**

We may spend a lifetime learning how to live a loving Christian life, but sooner or later we will confront three more threads needed along with Love to weave into our faith fabric: forgiveness, repentance, and reconciliation. Without these, expressing Christian love is almost impossible. These three practices are important – necessary – not only for our own personal spirituality, but also in how Christians demonstrate their faith to others.



**Forgiveness**: In Matthew 18:21-35, *the Parable of Forgiveness*, we read the story of a king who forgave an overwhelming debt, but the debtor did not reciprocate. Jesus' lesson in this story emphasizes the importance of showing the same mercy to others that we receive, and it highlights the incredible power of forgiveness, not just for the forgiven but also for the forgiver. Forgiveness can free us from the burden of anger and resentment, leading to inner peace and restored relationships. Love is not possible without forgiveness, and it works both ways.

**Repentance**, as described in the Bible, isn't just saying, "I'm sorry." It's about deep remorse, a change of heart, turning away from wrongdoing, and letting go of our hard-heartedness. Repentance involves recognizing our mistakes, seeking forgiveness, and making a genuine commitment to change. *"Rend your heart, and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate."* (Joel 2:13)



The Bible encourages **reconciliation** with both God and our fellow human beings. In Matthew we find guidance on reconciling with others, emphasizing that we should seek to resolve conflicts and mend relationships before approaching God. *"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister*

*has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift."* (Matthew 5:23-24, NIV)

**Let us remember the Parable of Forgiveness as a Healing Path**, recognizing the power of forgiveness, embracing true repentance, and seeking reconciliation in our lives. In doing so, we can walk a path of healing, build bridges, heal wounds, and foster a more harmonious and fulfilling journey through our lives. And let us not forget the healing path of forgiveness, repentance, and reconciliation is a two-way street!

*May we love and forgive others as God has loved and forgiven us! - Vance*

**Prayer box:** let us give prayers of thanks for our friends and families who have recovered from illness; pray for those suffering in the Middle East and Ukraine; pray for those suffering from natural disasters; and pray for all those whose work spreads the kingdom of God. ***Lord, hear our prayer!***