

Finding the Way Back to Mayberry

Episode # 85, “The Great Filling Station Robbery”

Introduction:

A young man, Jimmy Morgan, is accused of breaking into Wally’s garage and stealing supplies. Andy must figure out who the real culprit really is. Barney enters the electronics age when he decides to solve a mysterious string of robberies at Wally’s Filling Station using modern police technology. Andy is more concerned with clearing the name of the young man who was given a fresh start with a job at the station and who is chief suspect in the case.

Lesson Points:

Blaming (Not Building) Better People – *Barney, Mr. Carter* – Zec. 7:9-10, Luke 6:37-40
Suspicious Minds Jump to Convenient Conclusions – Col. 3:12-14, Proverbs 11:9
Searching for the Truth Requires the Right Attitude – 1 Co. 13:1-13, Mt. 22:37-40
Stop Judging a Book By Its Cover – Matthew 7:1-5, Romans 2:1, 1 Samuel 16:7

Trusting in the Truth – *Andy and Gomer* – Job 15:31

Be Discerning While Focused on Truth – Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 7:15-20
Seek the Truth Before Forming an Opinion – John 7:24, Psalm 32:8, Amos 5:24
Be Humble/See the Good in Others – Ro. 12:9-21, Eph. 4:1-2, Heb.5:2, Mt.18:1-6
Can A Leopard Change Its Spots? – Jeremiah 13:23, Matthew 18:15-19
Listen *and Pray* to Make the Right Decision – Isa. 55:6-13, Jas. 2:12-13, Pr.19:20

Turning the Other Cheek – *Jimmy Morgan* – Luke 6:27-36

Don’t Strike Back in Anger – Matthew 5:38-45, 1 Thess. 5:14-15, Proverbs 15:1
Don’t Give Up - Proverbs 17:22
Focus on the Good Inside Yourself, Without Putting Others Down – Jas. 1:19-27
Have Faith That the Truth Will Prevail – Zechariah 4:6, Philippians 2:1-11
Ask God to Heal You of Hurts Involving Trust – Ro. 12:1-14, Ps. 138:7 & 27:1-3

God Can Turn Troubles Around (Out of the darkness, the light is born) – Genesis 1:1-5

In Mistakes – 2 Kings 4:38-41
In Misunderstandings – Acts 15:36-41
In Misfortune – Acts 16:16-40
In Misery – Matthew 9:18-26

Discussion:

- 1) What was your first impression of Mr. Carter? Of Jimmy? Why do you think Mr. Carter accused him of stealing? Why didn’t he calm down after Jimmy’s explanation?
- 2) What did Mr. Carter mean when he said he didn’t want someone like Jimmy around? Do you think many people had trusted Jimmy before? Did Andy have much reason to trust him? Why did he give him so many chances? Why didn’t Barney do the same?
- 3) Why do you think the Hanson boys picked the week Wally was gone to rob the station? Why didn’t Gomer worry about hiring Jimmy, after hearing the rumors about him? Do you think Andy would have caught the crooks if it hadn’t been for Jimmy?
- 4) Surely Jimmy realized the reputation he was getting, especially with people like Mr. Carter voicing their opinions. Why didn’t he grow bitter or give up? Of the three “electronal marvels” in this episode, whose was the most efficient in law enforcement?
- 5) Can a person be *too* trusting? Have you ever given up on someone who needed your trust? Have you ever been deceived by somebody you trusted? How would you feel (and react) if someone unfairly accused you? We have heard, “The night is darkest just before the dawn.” What do you do when you find yourself in these “dark” situations?

Final Thought:

Andy: I guess we’ll have to chalk one up to the youth of today, Barn.... not to mention good ol’ scientific know-how!

Reference Verses

New International Version 1984 (NIV1984)

Zechariah 7:9-10

⁹ “This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. ¹⁰ Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. In your hearts do not think evil of each other.’”

Luke 6:37-40

Judging Others

³⁷ “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

³⁹ He also told them this parable: “Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? ⁴⁰ A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.

Colossians 3:12-14

¹² Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Proverbs 11:9

⁹ With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor,
but through knowledge the righteous escape.

1 Corinthians 13

¹ If I speak in the tongues^[a] of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames,^[b] but have not love, I gain nothing.

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

⁸ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰ but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. ¹¹ When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. ¹²

Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

¹³ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Matthew 22:37-40

³⁷ Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’^[a] ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’^[b] ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Matthew 7

Judging Others

¹ “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ² For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

³ “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

Romans 2

God’s Righteous Judgment

¹ You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.

1 Samuel 16:7

⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”

Job 15:31

³¹ Let him not deceive himself by trusting what is worthless,
for he will get nothing in return.

Proverbs 3:5-6

⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
⁶ in all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make your paths straight.[a]

Matthew 7:15-20

A Tree and Its Fruit

15 “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16 By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

John 7:24

24 Stop judging by mere appearances, and make a right judgment.”

Psalms 32:8

8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you and watch over you.

Amos 5:24

24 But let justice roll on like a river,
righteousness like a never-failing stream!

Romans 12:9-21

Love

9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.[a] Do not be conceited.

17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,”[b] says the Lord. 20 On the contrary:

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”[c]

21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Ephesians 4:1-2

Unity in the Body of Christ

1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Hebrews 5:2

2 He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness.

Matthew 18:1-6

The Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven

1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

2 He called a little child and had him stand among them. 3 And he said: “I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 “And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. 6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Jeremiah 13:23

23 Can the Ethiopian[a] change his skin
or the leopard its spots?
Neither can you do good
who are accustomed to doing evil.

Matthew 18:15-19

A Brother Who Sins Against You

15 “If your brother sins against you,[a] go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. 16 But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’[b] 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

18 “I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be[c] bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be[d] loosed in heaven.

19 “Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.

Isaiah 55:6-13

6 Seek the LORD while he may be found;
call on him while he is near.
7 Let the wicked forsake his way
and the evil man his thoughts.
Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him,
and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

8 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,”
declares the LORD.

9 “As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it

without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,
11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.
12 You will go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and hills
will burst into song before you,
and all the trees of the field
will clap their hands.
13 Instead of the thornbush will grow the pine tree,
and instead of briars the myrtle will grow.
This will be for the LORD's renown,
for an everlasting sign,
which will not be destroyed."

James 2:12-13

12 Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, 13 because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!

Proverbs 19:20

20 Listen to advice and accept instruction,
and in the end you will be wise.

Luke 6:27-36

Love for Enemies

27 "But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29 If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. 30 Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you.

32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full. 35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Matthew 5:38-45

An Eye for an Eye

38 "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' [a] 39 But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. 41 If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.
Love for Enemies

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor[b] and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I tell you: Love your enemies[c] and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

1 Thessalonians 5:14-15

14 And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. 15 Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.

Proverbs 15:1

1 A gentle answer turns away wrath,
but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Proverbs 17:22

22 A cheerful heart is good medicine,
but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

James 1:19-27

Listening and Doing

19 My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, 20 for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. 21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

26 If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless. 27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Zechariah 4:6

6 So he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,’ says the LORD Almighty.

Philippians 2:1-11

Imitating Christ’s Humility

1 If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in very nature[a] God,
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
7 but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature[b] of a servant,

being made in human likeness.
8 And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death—
even death on a cross!
9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Romans 12:1-14

Living Sacrifices

1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual[a] act of worship. 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. 4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his[b] faith. 7 If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; 8 if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Love

9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. 11 Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. 12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Psalm 138:7

7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble,
you preserve my life;
you stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes,
with your right hand you save me.