Sometimes siblings fight! At times it can escalate to where it is not just an exchange of words but an exchange of blows. When a parent steps in to break up the fight, you can count on both siblings pointing the finger at the other and saying, “He started it! He hit me first!”

The logic here, is that you have done nothing wrong if the other sibling started it. If my brother hit me first, then of course I am going to hit him back and no one should have a problem with that.

Basically, if you started it, that’s wrong. If you finished it, that’s only fair.

As human beings, we place a very high priority on things being fair. From early childhood on there is an intense desire for justice and rightness. When things seem unfair, we are outraged. The cry can be heard from every home and every family, “That’s not fair!”

It’s hard to argue with the logic, isn’t it? It seems like a basic life principle. The challenge is, when you take the get-what-you-deserve approach to relationships, it breaks down quickly.
Our attitude is to be nice when we are treated nicely; to love when we are loved. We need the other person to demonstrate maturity for us to respond maturely. We tend to respond in kind. If this is how we approach life, all it takes for a relationship to go sideways is for one person to let another down, which is guaranteed to happen!

But in Matthew 5 Jesus lays out an expectation that goes against our strong desire for things to be fair. In fact, he suggests that our expectation represents a very low bar for loving others.

Here is what Jesus said:

32 “If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them! 33 And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you get credit? Even sinners do that much! 34 And if you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other sinners for a full return.

Summary: It is no credit to you if you operate on the reciprocation principle. Everyone does that!

Then Jesus goes on to present a case for not playing fair!

35 “Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. 36 You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate.

Instead of giving people what they deserve, give them something they don’t deserve: grace. Then you will stand out as a follower of Jesus. Kindness and compassion, when it is undeserved is the truest test of love.

Jesus is calling us to not play fair! Are you up for the challenge?
Welcome to those new to our church!

Our library is located in the portable, back and to your right. No check out, just take what you want and return in two weeks. You do not have to be a member to use the library. Please contact me if you have questions.

From the website Naturalbeachliving.com comes 10 great reasons why reading is so important. I have summarized them here:

1. It uses your imagination.
2. Gives you greater focus and concentration.
3. It improves your memory.
4. Helps with communication.
5. It can be entertaining.
6. Generates bonding with your children when you read to them. (Moms & Dads, older brothers & sisters, babysitters, we have a GREAT children’s section.)
7. Language development (for all ages!).
8. It’s educational (we never stop learning!).
9. Creates greater fluency.
10. Makes you smarter.

This is all FREE in our library! Visit the website if you wish to read more on each of the categories. Our library is very rich in material. If you need help finding something, please ask me.

We have a number of Bibles in our library that are free for the taking. Please feel free to keep extras in your car to share with someone in need. On the side of the bookcase by the Bibles is an explanation of the different translations. It takes a verse and shows the different ways the verse is translated.

Note that there are now some awesome book marks in the library by the return box. Help yourself! Thank you to Miriam Weldon for donating a number of the more interesting ones.
...Continued

Please help yourself to the magazines in the library. At the beginning of July I will no longer be keeping magazines. Thank you to all who have donated. If anyone wants the magazine rack, let me know.

Thank you to our anonymous donors. I am always putting new books and videos on the table in the library. It is usually too much to list in a newsletter. Check often!

The high school students didn’t rise to the challenge on the contest for the Starbucks card. I am now upping the amount and offering it to any middle school student who can give me the name and number of the missing book in the J.B. Jenkins Margo Mysteries Series in the Teen section of our library. A Starbucks gift card will be yours if you can answer the above question. I am usually at the first service on Sundays.
A Moment for Prayer

Valerie White

Following Christ can be very confusing at times. To me it is most certainly counter-intuitive. We all, yes every one of us, pass through times of challenge, pain, fear, and hurt. We find ourselves in situations or circumstances which seem overwhelming. Life feels intolerable. Every day you face the world hoping for change yet there is none. You may feel frustrated, claustrophobic, suffering injustice, unhappy, and trapped. You feel caught, as they say, between a rock and a hard place with no visible relief.

If you are like me, you whine, complain, talk to others who are very sympathetic and encourage you to take action, and/or look for escape. You cry tears of frustration and disappointment. Finally, you pray. Most commonly I ask for relief. Just like Jesus in Gethsemane “...Take this cup from me...” Mar 14:36 NIV. Yet the struggle continues. Seeking wisdom and direction you begin a Bible study; in my case I was able to join Bible Study Fellowship. I have prayed for many years to join BSF but my life circumstances have not allowed it. This year it is right in my neighborhood, my work schedule allows, and I get to take my two youngest grandchildren...
A Moment for Prayer
Valerie White..Continued

with me! That’s called an answer to prayer. I jump into first Samuel and walk away with;

❖ God will allow life circumstances that teach us His character and mature us.
❖ These circumstances will reveal what I am inside.
❖ The areas revealed are ones which need to be brought under God’s control.
❖ Responding with God’s wisdom and words influences results.

Did you catch that? First God reveals Himself, His nature, His character, His point of view, and His desires for people. Second He reveals to me those traits (in me) which need His correcting and healing hand: anger, selfishness, fear, lack of knowledge, where I waste time, a stubborn heart, an unyielding spirit, a wound long lost to memory yet still influencing my behavior. And so many other things I just don’t see.

I am left with questions like;

❖ Do I follow the culture or God?
❖ Do I allow these situations to open my eyes to the true me?
❖ Am I responding by faith or fear?
❖ When I show care, generosity, or mercy to another, do I have expectations?
❖ Am I praying, “Thy will be done on earth as in heaven”?

I stumbled across a little book by Joni Eareckson Tada and Steven Estes titled When God Weeps. In it I read about suffering, real suffering, and how God uses difficult and harsh circumstances in the lives of believers to reveal His great love and mercy.

I am tired and worn, then remember Jesus’ words,
“Come unto me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”
Matthew 11:29-30  ESV

I pray, “Really Lord? Really? I am tired. I am worn out from trying. I want a break, please. I do not see change...please, please let me see change. Let me see You at work in this ugly world.” In the quiet I hear...

“Therefore, my dear friends, in view of these things, strive to make your calling and election sure. For if after these things you suffer, it is a precious treasure for your salvation.”
2 Peter 1:10  NIV

Seeking reassurance and comfort I read my daily devotional, currently Unshakeable by Christine Caine, and I get;

“Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!”
Psalm 27:14 NIV

“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”
Galatians 6:9  NIV

“Therefore, my Fellow Sons of Abolitionists, though you may have to meet more straying opponents, I say to you that you should not go back. God will be with you, who is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God will be with you.”

A Moment for Prayer
Valerie White..Continued

“There is a line often used in the Chronicles of Narnia, “Aslan the lion says to one of the characters ‘Child I am telling you your story not that of another.’” Oh, I get it, God is working on me. I am the focus of His attention, love, mercy, and patience. He is making me better. He is also all about others, but I need not concern myself. He is taking care of them and me in His time and grace.

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ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, So shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall make a name for the LORD, an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

Isaiah 55:6-13 esv

In the end I am left with this prayer:

- Father, thank you for these trials. Thank you for the path you have placed me upon. I don’t understand but thank you.
- Jesus, I do desire to “come after you”. I want so very much to see you lifted up and glorified.
- Holy Spirit, please help me see God’s way, make me brave to follow in it, and show me how to trust you more.
Registration is now OPEN for 2019 Vacation Bible School!
July 22-26 at MVCC
Register online by June 23rd for $25/child.
Register after June 23rd for $30/child.

VBS is for kids who are going into Kindergarten next year (age 5 before 9/1/2019) up through 6th grade this year (7th grade next year).

Scholarships are available for families.
Contact Amanda Krantz (amanda@mvccweb.org) for more information.