



Beauty and the Beast is upon us, and believe me, you won't want to miss this amazing production that brings God's story of redemption to life. Thank you to our amazing Tuesday 13+ class for their many hours of hard work on the show. Becky Passner has joined me as co-director, and Josh Lyman joined us as assistant director to help with detailed acting work for the Beast.

Hope Auer is our musical director, writing beautiful musical and vocal arrangements to bring the story to life, and Audrey Hanna has created choreography that captures the spirit of the show. Sarah Sherman, our TTA extraordinaire, has headed up everything from scenework to stage management.

Beauty and the Beast ties directly to what we talked about last week in our devotion. If you remember, we talked about not just saying that we love others but doing something to show them that they are loved. Truth and action, right? Christianna exhibits this idea of truth and action when she seeks to take her father's place at the Beast's manor.

But what about the Beast? If Christianna has a choice to put her love into action, is the Beast any different? Is he a victim of some unimaginable circumstance or tragedy that he cannot overcome, or is he just like Christianna? Does he have a choice? Can he overcome the darkness that has overtaken him?

The Bible tells us that no one is beyond God's reach, and in the midst of tragedy, God's arms are wide open, waiting to receive us. Sometimes the sadness may be overwhelming, but God wants to hear about your sadness. Sometimes the things that we do seem like they are unforgiveable, but Jesus was the sacrifice for that sin, and when we confess that sin and ask forgiveness, it is given by our loving God. God wants to hear from us - our joy and our sorrow, our thanksgiving and our struggles - He wants to be part of it all!

Little children let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action! We have a responsibility to be like Jesus and love one another well! Are we responding in love with a thank you when we are corrected? Are we responding in love when someone is unkind to us? Do we choose to love or allow bitterness to creep in and settle in our hearts? We cannot forgive others on our own, but by seeking God's plan for forgiveness each day in His word, He can change our hearts and give us grace for others. Let's find freedom in forgiveness from God, and then put our love in action by forgiving others!

KEY VERSES: Make allowances for each other's faults and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.

Colossians 3:13-14 NLT