

06 - Forgiveness

Over the past sessions we have been walking through the themes of the Lord's Prayer.

When we pray the Lord's prayer we start by acknowledging that God is our Father, and we are his children, then we reflect on God's holiness, God's story and God's provision before we come to the place where recognizing our sinfulness we can ask with confidence God to forgive us.

Celebrate! Throw a party! Jesus is standing at the door and knocking! Open the door and invite him in to dine with you (Rev 3:20)

Give thanks with a grateful heart! For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life! (John 3:16)

Relax! Jesus didn't come into the world to condemn you, but to save the world through him! (John 3:17)

Rejoice! If you confess your sins God is faithful and just and will forgive your sins and purify you from all unrighteousness! When you confess your sins, they are forgotten, never to be remembered again. Your slate has been wiped clean! Yes, you will still have to deal with the consequences of your sin, but you can move forward without bearing the shame or the guilt of your sin.

Forgiveness has been there all along! Avail yourself of what is truly freeing – sincere confession and repentance. There is no need to stubbornly prefer the illusion of self-dependence. There is no need for self-righteousness, or self-justification. Jesus invites you today to enter into the blessedness of forgiveness.

The glory of God in Christ is that he offers forgiveness for your sins! The cross of Christ is the means by which God does this. It is in the power of the cross that you are able to pray to God for forgiveness, knowing that your account can be settled because the debt has been paid. Hallelujah!

When you are tempted to believe that God's forgiveness doesn't apply to you, remember God's promises.

*Who is a God like you,
who pardons sin and forgives the transgression
of the remnant of his inheritance?
You do not stay angry forever
but delight to show mercy.
You will again have compassion on us;
you will tread our sins underfoot
and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. (Micah 7:18-19)*

God has forgiven your sins and has set you apart as holy, to do what he has called you to do with integrity! Since your sins are forgiven you are filled with the Holy Spirit who enables you to trust, to obey, to walk in righteousness and stand in God's holy presence. Because your sins are forgiven you can say with confidence 'Abba Father'.

Having experienced the joy and blessing of having your sins forgiven, we still have anxious thoughts; we still have offensive behaviors. Like the Psalmist, invite God to search your heart and know your anxious thoughts. Invite God to see if there is any offensive way in you and lead you in the way everlasting (Ps 139:23-24). This is a prayer that God is always willing to answer.

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Have you made a foolish choice or a dumb mistake? Is your desire for appearances keeping you from admitting your wrongs? Guilt flourishes in secrecy, weighing you down. Pushed to the dark recesses of the back of your mind, guilt slowly grows like mould on the food at the back of the fridge. Guilt loses its power when exposed to the light of day.

What fears, what shame is holding you back today? Hand your fears, shattered dreams, broken heart to Jesus and allow his cleansing blood to wash these away and fill you with peace and joy.

How has the attitudes and behavior of your workplace rubbed off on you? Come to Jesus today, and every day, and ask him to wash your feet, to cleanse the stains of this world, and your workplace away. Ask Jesus to wash away your sinful responses to the grime of this world and your workplace. Forgiveness is freely available!

When Jesus washes you, you are whiter than snow!

When Jesus cleanses you, he creates a pure heart in you and renews a steadfast spirit within you.

When Jesus forgives you, he fills your heart to overflowing with joy, and grants you a willing spirit to sustain you (ps 51:7-12). When you have experienced the blessing of forgiveness, you have room in your heart to welcome others in. You are no longer chained to your past, you are free to choose to move forward, standing on the promise of forgiveness!

God delights to shower his grace upon you when you come to him for forgiveness.

You are extraordinarily forgiven because you are extraordinarily loved!

Yes, forgiveness is too good ... but it is true!

It is possible that you may be reading this today, and have never experienced the joy of forgiveness. Or maybe you are harboring a secret sin that neither your partner, nor your coworkers know about. Jesus has bought your forgiveness! Jesus is at work to transform you from the inside out so that you can receive God's gracious gift of forgiveness. If you would like to come to Jesus today and ask for forgiveness, he will break the chains and set you free! I invite you to pray this prayer if you are in need of forgiveness today ...

God be merciful to me a sinner, and make me to know and believe in Jesus Christ; for I see, that if his righteousness had not been, or I have not faith in that righteousness, I am utterly cast away. Lord, I have heard that you are a merciful God, and have ordained that your Son Jesus Christ should be the Savior of the world; and moreover, that you are willing to bestow him upon such a poor sinner as I am—and I am a sinner indeed. Lord, take therefore this opportunity, and magnify your grace in the salvation of my soul, through your Son Jesus Christ. Amen. (John Bunyan, Pilgrim's Progress)

If you have prayed this prayer, please email me, I would love to encourage you today!