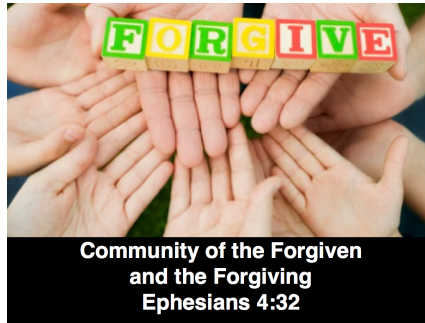


Mike's Notes 14th July 2024



In Ephesians Paul teaches us how we live as a community of Jesus:

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave Ephs:4:30-32

Jesus Forgives Us: Luke 23:34-43. An example of a criminal who had no way of making amends for his crimes yet because he put his faith in Jesus he was offered a place in paradise - forgiven.

What do we say in the Lord's prayer: “Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us How does that work out in practise?”



On November 8th 1987 a bomb planted by the IRA exploded during Enniskillen's Remembrance Service injuring Gordon Wilson and Killing his 20 year old daughter Marie. He said of those who killed his daughter, " I bear ill will. I bear no grudge and I will pray for them tonight"

An example of forgiveness:

Gordon Wilson interview with Terry Wogan:

<https://youtu.be/6C-aBS3TvCM>

In the New Testament Greek forgiveness means, “Letting go” of what they did to you or someone else. Not holding people hostage to what they have done against us. That is what Gordon Wilson did.

When missionaries in northern Alaska were translating the Bible into the language of the Eskimos, they discovered there was no word in that language for forgiveness. After much patient listening, however, they discovered a word that means, **“not being able to think about it anymore.”** That word was

used throughout the translation to represent forgiveness, because God's promise to repentant sinners is, **"I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember it no more"**. For all our sin and failure he does not hold it against us when we have trusted him for forgiveness.

You do not have to forget what someone did against you in order to forgive them but by God's grace you may be able over time to forget. God can bring healing.

In obedience to Christ we forgive as Jesus forgave us. Even if we don't feel that we have forgiven them. And, what you will find is the feelings will follow your obedience to Christ so that you won't feel hate towards them anymore. **Forgiveness is a healing process.**

Forgiveness does not always, but, can lead to reconciliation - a couple were about to divorce, they both were invited by two different people to a Billy Graham crusade. Amazingly on hearing the Good News, both separately responded to Christ's call. Later they shared together what had happened to them at the Billy Graham crusade and decided to give their marriage another go with Christ's help. As God forgave them in Christ, they could forgive each other and start again.



Often as churches we are loving but we are not perfect we can fail each other, there can be conflict and a lack of love and wisdom in what we say and do. As Christ forgives us we can forgive one another and work towards reconciliation even if some times that will mean going our separate ways.

Jesus commands us to keep our relationships in good shape by sorting things out and not letting the Devil get a foothold and separates us.

"Therefore," Jesus says, "if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First be reconciled to them, then come and offer your gift.

Matt 5: 23-24

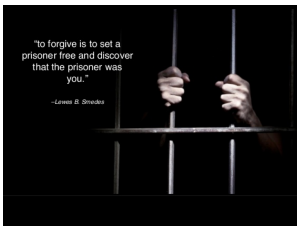
Early on in my ministry, there was a lady, a new Christian, great at first, but then because of previous hurts became judgemental. She left the church. I desperately tried to see her to do what Jesus said. I went to her house she would not open the door. I felt a failure and really bad about it and blamed myself. **Then the Lord showed me reconciliation is two ways, I could not be reconciled with her if she didn't want to be reconciled with me.** I could forgive her and I hoped one day she might forgive and be reconciled with me. And many of us can find ourselves in that position. It is not always possible to be reconciled but we can forgive.

In cases of abuse of different kinds God can help us forgive but it is understandable why someone would not want to be reconciled and put

themselves at risk. **We can forgive and there are times when we can seek to be reconciled.**

Even Paul and Barnabas had a real ding dong over whether Mark was fit to join them on their next missionary journey. Barnabas wanted to give him a second chance, Paul felt he could not trust him. P & B went their separate ways. **Yet in Scripture we find Paul alluding to Mark in affectionate terms later** (1 Corinthians 9:6; 2 Timothy 4:11).

At times we can part our ways as Christians, but doing it in the spirit of Christ with forgiveness and amicably.



The story of Renee's forgiveness of Eric who killed her daughter in a drink and driving accident teaches us:

To forgive is to set a prisoner free and realise the prisoner is you.



Mathew West wrote this song about it which you are going to hear:

Mathew West Forgiveness Song:

It's the hardest thing to give away
And the last thing on your mind today
It always goes to those who don't
deserve

It's the opposite of how you feel
When the pain they caused is just too
real
Takes everything you have to say the
word
Forgiveness, forgiveness

It flies in the face of all your pride
It moves away the mad inside
It's always anger's own worst enemy
Even when the jury and the judge
Say you've got a right to hold a grudge
It's the whisper in your ear saying set it
free
Forgiveness, forgiveness
Forgiveness, forgiveness

Show me how to love the unlovable
Show me how to reach the unreachable
Help me now to do the impossible

Forgiveness, forgiveness
Help me now to do the impossible
Forgiveness

It'll clear the bitterness away
It can even set a prisoner free
There is no end to what its power can do
So let it go and be amazed by what you
see through eyes of grace
The prisoner that it really frees is you
Forgiveness, forgiveness
Forgiveness, forgiveness

Show me how to love the unlovable
Show me how to reach the unreachable
Help me now to do the impossible
Forgiveness
I want finally to set it free
Show me how to see what your mercy
sees
Help me now to give what You gave to
me
Forgiveness, forgiveness
Forgiveness, forgiveness

