

Sunday Sermon

March 29, 2020.

This sermon concludes our Lenten series on forgiveness. I hope and pray that you received something beneficial for your spiritual life out of this. This is often a topic that is much talked about but often not plumbed to the depths that it could be.

I have found that if you truly want to know someone the best ways to do that are to pray and eat with them. It is recorded in Mathew 6-9 and Luke 11:2-4 that the disciples do just that with Jesus. They ask Him to teach them to pray. They want to know how to talk to God. What Jesus will teach them will reveal an insight into how He prays and His relationship with God through His personal prayer. Jesus directs them on what their prayer should contain. There is an acknowledgement of God and His kingdoms work on Earth, our daily sustenance and finally two lines on forgiveness. They are almost in the middle of the prayer. These two lines are the core that holds the other sentences of the prayer together.

These two lines contain the request for God's forgiveness as we are to forgive others. The use of the plural in the word debts, Jesus is directing the disciples and us, to pray for the Father's forgiveness of all our debts. This is all inclusive and not selective. So we are to forgive all the debts of others as often as they occur against us. These two lines in this prayer are a personal directive requiring the action of forgiveness and reconciliation. This prayer is so powerful because it comes from the mouth of the Son of God. If He tells us how to pray, this is how we should pray.

This prayer is beautiful because it gives us an insight into the person of Jesus. It reveals a part of His prayer life and how He prays and His relationship with the Father. When the disciples asked Him to teach them to pray, He taught them what He knew was important and what they would need. This is a prayer that is so deep on so many levels.

It is one thing to know a prayer and to recite it. To make it part of your daily prayer life. Living that prayer and making it a part of your being, sets a powerful example to those around you. Luke records the living out of the two lines in the Lord's Prayer. Jesus does this as He hangs on the cross grasping for breath. Luke 23-34, "Then Jesus said, Father forgives them for they do not know what they are doing." As we discussed earlier, true forgiveness is being able to have empathy and compassion for those who injure you. The words, "Father, forgive them",

is a remarkable prayer. It shows the boundless empathy and compassion of the crucified Christ. They do not know what they are doing, illustrates that the leaders and executioners have no insight into the profound mystery that they are crucifying the Lord of Glory. This is the mystery of Good Friday. Human beings have killed their God and creator.

Jesus lived out the words He taught the disciples in the Lord's Prayer on Good Friday. This act was the greatest lesson He taught because of the cost and price that was paid to teach it. Jesus used the last hours of His life to teach us about forgiveness. Many scholars have speculated that the core of Jesus's ministry was to teach us how to forgive. He leaves us with a powerful example to follow. There is no price too great to reconcile humanity to God and one another.

God Bless, take care, stay safe and we'll be together soon.

Pastor Daren