



CONNECT GROUP NOTES

Sunday 17.12.2023

“Forgiveness”

Preacher

Ps. Cam Hall

Scripture

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.”

Colossians 3:12-15

Thought

Forgiveness is counter-cultural and it goes against our sin-nature. It confronts our brokenness. In Matthew 18:21-35, Jesus teaches on the topic of forgiveness in the parable of the master and the servant.

Sin carries an incredible price. It’s a price that we can never pay - it’s a gap that can never be bridged by any human effort. It’s impossible. No amount of time, no amount of earnest ambition, no self determination can reach the place of dissolving the depth of our sin. Only Christ. And yet, Christ removes it in full, and at great cost to Himself. The truth and reality of the depth of this grace must challenge us deeply.



When we look to others who have hurt us, it's a natural desire to feel the need for them to repay. We feel they owe us for the hurt they have put us (or someone who we love) through. It may even be right for that to occur, and yet, Christ dissolved our sin when we deserved to pay it.

Maybe we don't have the strength to forgive. In fact, if we try to forgive in our own strength, by our own willpower, we will fall short again and again. We count the offence by the weight of what they did, and our greatest efforts to forgive can't overcome the weight of that hurt. Yet Christ calls us to stop counting, and start forgiving.

The key is not to focus on the hurt, not even to focus on the act of forgiving - rather, we start by coming to Jesus in awe and wonder and thankfulness for His grace which was first poured out for our sin.

We dismiss the demand that others owe us something when we realise that we were first forgiven by Christ.

We release the right to hear "I'm sorry", and remove the weight of resentment, freeing us to live a life of peace.

We move that person, that situation, from our book to God's book. We place their offence and their lives in the hands of the author of life, and trust in God's grace and power which is so much more sufficient than ours.

There is brilliance in inconvenience. Forgiveness is a difficult thing, but Christ offers us His glorious brilliance in the midst of our weakness and struggle. He is always writing a new narrative, taking the old nature and turning it into a powerful, good story. God knows our story, our heartache, our pain, and He is working in the midst of our lives to weave a better story, a story that brings healing to our community, our families and our hearts.

And so, we walk the narrow road, the path toward life, the way that was marked out by our Maker, eyes on Him, letting go of the offence that so easily scars us, and we journey on to the brilliant promise of a new day with a God who loves us still.



Discussion Points

1. Why do I think I hold on so tightly to the 'right' to be repaid for wrong done to me or those I care about?
2. What does it mean for me to truly trust God in the area of forgiveness?
3. What might be the first step for me in letting go of an offence?

Personal application + Prayer

Dear Jesus,

Thank You that you know me completely. You know my hurts, you know my heart's desires, you know me completely and You long to take me on the journey of grace and growth. Today, I place my life afresh in Your hands, Lord. I place those who have hurt me in Your hands, Lord. Take this burden from me, I release to You all that is rightfully Yours. Thank you that Your mercies are new every morning, and lead me on the path everlasting.

Amen.

Need Prayer?

We acknowledge that this topic is a difficult one and may raise challenges within you that are hard to overcome. Our pastoral team would love to partner with you in prayer this week. If you want to talk something through, let's chat. Reach out via info@nexuschurch.com.au, call the Church office on 07 3353 1377, or drop by the office during business hours. You may also want to reach out to a good friend or family member who can journey with you as you journey with Christ on this topic. You don't have to go it alone.