

# SERMON NOTES

SUNDAY 04.05.25

**PREACHER: PS ADAM DODDS**

IN LIGHT OF THE CROSS

## BECOMING CHRISTLIKE

*BEING [HEART], THINKING [MIND] & **DOING [BODY]***

*[A PERSONAL REFLECTION]*

**Conviction of a Disciple:** As we become more like Jesus, we live as people secure in His finished work, thinking with renewed minds shaped by grace, and responding with lives marked by repentance, freedom, and forgiveness freely given to others.

## OVERVIEW

While repentance and confession are important in our walk with God, they are not the key to earning forgiveness. Forgiveness has already been given through the finished work of Jesus on the cross, and our response is not to strive for it, but to live in the freedom it brings - confident, cleansed, and completely loved.

## ACTION

**Step 1:** Reflect: When you stumble or fall short, what is your first instinct? Is it to hide, to strive, or to rest in God's grace? Reflect on how you view God's forgiveness. Do you see it as something to earn or something already freely given?

**Step 2:** Commit: This week, commit to reminding yourself daily that you are already forgiven in Christ. Choose a verse like Romans 8:1 or 2 Corinthians 5:19 to meditate on and declare over yourself.

**Step 3:** Act: Ask the Holy Spirit to help you live from a place of grace, not guilt. Take one practical step to extend that same grace to someone in your world, whether through forgiveness, encouragement, or simply being present.

# THOUGHT

**SCRIPTURE:** LUKE 23:34-35

Have you ever had that moment where you messed up, and the weight of it just sat on you like a thick fog? Maybe it wasn't life-shattering, but it was enough to make your shoulders slump, your confidence dip, and your spirit shrink. Like being pulled over for rolling through a stop sign, it stays with you not because of the fine, but because of the feeling. That *"I should've known better"* voice rings loud.

This is often how we respond to sin. We feel like we've let God down (again). So, we reach for what feel like spiritual band-aids. We read more Scripture, pray harder, serve more, repent louder, thinking perhaps *then* we'll feel forgiven. But deep down, we wonder: *Am I really right with God?*

The Good News—the Gospel—is even better than we think. Forgiveness was never ours to earn. The cross of Christ wasn't a down payment on your forgiveness, waiting on your good behaviour to complete the deal. It was the full and final payment. When Jesus hung there, wrongly accused, mocked, betrayed, bleeding for the sins of the world, He looked at the people responsible and prayed: *"Father, forgive them."* That forgiveness wasn't conditional on their apology; it was a declaration of divine mercy from a God who gives grace before we even ask for it.

So what does that mean for us?

It means you are already forgiven, and not just for the sins you've admitted, but the ones you haven't even seen yet. That includes the stumbles yet to come. As Paul puts it, *"God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, no longer counting people's sins against them"* (2 Corinthians 5:19). That's not future tense. That's done. Forgiveness is your starting point, not your reward.

Repentance, then, is not the price of forgiveness. It's the privilege of relationship. We confess because we've hurt the heart of a Father we love, not because we're afraid He'll turn His back on us. We repent not to gain favour, but to walk in freedom. Like children learning how to walk, we fall, and our Father cheers us on as we get up again. Forgiven. Still His. Always His.

So, when you sin—and you will—you don't climb a ladder back to God. You remember you never left His arms. Forgiveness is not a process. It is a person. His name is Jesus, and He already paid it all.

Let's live like it's true.

# DISCUSSION

[A GROUP REFLECTION]

1. What do you instinctively do after you've sinned? How does that reveal what you believe about God's forgiveness?
2. How does it change your view of repentance to see it as a response to forgiveness, rather than a requirement for it?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 5:19. What does it mean to live each day as someone whose sins are no longer counted against them?
4. What difference would it make in your life this week to truly believe, "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus"?

# PRAYER

Lord,

Thank You for the gift of complete forgiveness through Jesus. Help me to live from grace and not for it. To rest in the truth that I am fully known and fully loved. Teach me to repent not out of fear, but out of love for You. May my life reflect the freedom and forgiveness I've received.

Amen