

DAY 20 FORGIVEN



"Friend, your sins are forgiven."

Luke 5.20

Maybe our most grievous sins occur when we fail to properly love. We let people down; we hurt others; we offend; we are unresponsive to the needs of others. This failure to love is at the root of so many of our problems, both personally and socially. In many ways, this marks our lives as we struggle from one failure to the next.

And culturally, we live in a moment that doesn't know how to respond to such failures. This isn't to minimize the effects

of so many of these failures, but we are a culture in search of atonement. We are a culture in search of both genuine repentance as well as how to forgive.

This is what makes the Christian narrative so provocative—the possibility of forgiveness in the midst of a culture that doesn't know how to forgive.

Our word of the day is the word "Forgiven." A powerfully important and transformative word. It is forgiveness that is at the center of our identity as Christians. We are a forgiven people that have been made new by the work of Jesus. As we live in a moment that wrestles with how to forgive, we as Jesus followers look to God as the prime example of what forgiveness looks like.

In the season of Lent, we are given the opportunity to explore the areas in which we need forgiveness. We are exposed for who we truly are and can no longer hide behind pretension. But we should not be without hope. Lent reminds us of our failure and our sin, but it also points toward the redemptive work of Jesus. As Trevor Hudson writes,

"The good news is that God is more eager to forgive us than we will ever know. God is always there to embrace us, to receive us home again, and to let us start afresh. We see this clearly in the ways Jesus constantly offers forgiveness to those around him who have failed." - Trevor Hudson

This love and experience of forgiveness is what animates us to live in harmony with those around us. And we are, therefore, called to love and forgive in the same manner that God has loved and forgiven us. So if we are to do this well, we also must experience the same forgiveness and embrace the forgiveness that we have received from God.

As we consider this act of forgiveness expressed toward us, I want to invite you to consider the many ways we all need forgiveness. And as you face down your failures, your shadow-side, and your sins. May you hear the words of Jesus, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

Daily Practice

Take time today to kneel in God's presence. Share your failures as honestly as you can with God. Hear these words of Jesus: "Friend, your sins are forgiven." Receive this forgiveness and step into the new life God offers. If you need to make amends with someone, commit yourself to doing it as soon as possible.

The below reflections are written by congregants & staff of CPC. All reflections are following Trevor Hudson's book *Pauses for Lent* and are both heavily influenced and borrowed from his work. Any quotes without attribution should be credited to him.