

“COURAGEOUS FAITH: PRAYING THE LORD’S PRAYER”
“As We Forgive Others”

We are in a sermon series “Courageous Faith: Praying the Lord’s Prayer.” The prayer that Jesus taught is one of the ways we grow as disciples, leaning into God’s grace and trusting God’s love for us. Last week we looked at the phrase “forgive us.” This week we will focus on our need to forgive. Depending on which denomination you grew up, you may use either the word “debts” or “trespasses.” The ecumenical version changes that to “sins.” Each word is descriptive in its own way. “Forgive us our trespasses” reminds us we do trespass. “As we forgive those who trespass against us” reminds us that others will trespass and sin and hurt us. Finally, “Forgive us our sins” reminds us that we often fail, we hurt, harm and otherwise do things that are destructive. We sin, in large and small ways. “As we forgive those who sin against us” challenges us to do to others as we would others do to and for us. This week, we spend time remembering our forgiveness and finding ways to offer that same forgiveness to others, knowing that God offers it abundantly and with great love and grace. Pastor Cindy

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“As We Forgive Others”**

RETRANSLATION (FROM THE ARAMAIC)
O Breathing Life, your Name shines everywhere! Release a space to plant your Presence here. Imagine your possibilities now. Embody your desire in every light and form. Grow through us this moment's bread and wisdom. Untie the knots of failure binding us, as we release the strands we hold of others' faults. Help us not forget our Source, yet free us from not being in the Present. From you arises every Vision, Power and Song from gathering to gathering. Amen - May our future actions grow from here

This week’s sermon may be viewed at <http://sundaystreams.com/go/firstwichita>

Study Guide

Monday, February 11, 2019 Matthew 18: 21-22

The eighteenth chapter of Matthew begins with deep teachings. Who is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven? A child and those who welcome children. Advice from Jesus on not causing others to stumble and sin, stay away from temptations, how to work out conflict and the joy of God in forgiving. Peter asks the questions others must have been thinking, “How often should I forgive?” Jesus answers “seventy-seven times or seventy times seven”, in other words: LOTS! The disciples felt like there should be limits, but not Jesus. One wonders whether Jesus was referring to a person sinning against another again and again and again or whether or not Jesus realized that most people do not forgive easily. They must forgive a person again and again, because they cannot quite let go of the hurt and pain caused. Either way, Jesus said to forgive again and again. *Are there people in your life that are difficult to forgive? Is the hurt or sin recent or deep? How does that affect your life right now?*

Tuesday, February 12, 2019 Matthew 18: 23-27

Jesus tells this parable about forgiveness. The slave owed the king an incredible amount of money. One talent was worth more than 15 years wages for a common laborer. Ten thousand talents was equal to 150,000 years of labor. Not sure how a slave could get into so much debt, but this one obviously did. The king, figuring the slave would never be able to repay decided to sell him, his family and all his possessions and get whatever he could. The slave, devastated, prayed for mercy from his king. The king granted it and forgave the entire debt owed! The mercy of the king is almost unbelievable. The entire debt, not part of it, the entire debt wiped clean. Jesus' story would make a huge impact on those who were listening. It also makes a huge impact on anyone who has ever been in major debt. This first part doesn't really match with what Jesus said earlier, however. It will take the rest of the parable to make his point. *Have you ever had a major debt or sin forgiven? How did you respond to that gift of grace?*

Wednesday, February 13, 2019 Matthew 18: 28-30

Here in these verses are the deepest and most difficult portion of the parable Jesus shares. The slave who had been forgiven so much, seemed to have no grace or forgiveness in his body. He owed 10,000 talents to the king. His fellow slave owed him 100 denarii. To put those sums in perspective, one denarii was worth a day's labor. One talent was worth 15 YEARS of labor. Four months of wages verses 150,000 years of labor. The one who had been forgiven much, had no mercy in his heart to forgive a little. The Lord's Prayer states, *"Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us."* It is clear, like the slave, we have been forgiven, so we are called to forgive others. *Why do you think the slave refused to forgive his fellow slave? Have you ever been in a place where you have been forgiven, but refused to offer forgiveness to someone else?*

Thursday, February 14, 2019 Luke 6: 36-38

Today is Valentine's Day in the United States. Today's scripture is part of the sermon on the plain and is clear about behavior for the followers of Jesus. *"Be compassionate, don't judge, don't condemn, forgive and you will be forgiven."* On this day when we tend to think about childhood memories or "sweethearts" forgiveness is a gift of love that is indescribable and powerful. It is a true gift of love and grace. *Is there someone close to you that you need to forgive? On this Valentine's Day, write a note, send an e-mail, call someone that you love and forgive him or her. Then experience the power of the Lord's Prayer: Forgive us as we forgive.*

Friday, February 15, 2019 Matthew 18: 31-35

The other slaves, were "distressed" and reported the slaves behavior to the king. The king was furious! Remember the question of disciples, *"how often and how much should I forgive?"* Jesus was sharing in no uncertain terms the expectation he had of his disciples. *"Forgive us As we forgive others."* This phrase of the Lord's Prayer is only one with a condition attached. In other words, followers of Jesus are only forgiven to the extent they forgive. There are things that are so hard to forgive. Abuse, violence, murder, hatred, that are leveled against a person can be almost impossible to let go of the hurt and pain. Sometimes there are physical scars left, or emotional and mental scars. Still, Jesus says forgive. Perhaps offering forgiveness is not so much about the other person, but about healing our own wounds. Forgiving someone else means they don't "take up space in our hearts and lives." Sometimes letting go means we don't have to be consumed by them anymore. We are set free from resentment, hatred, bitterness. *Is there someone in your life you have not forgiven? Does the thought of that person make you angry or bitter or resentful? Today, for a few moments, try forgiving that person. Maybe it will not last long, but beginning today, find a way to let go and let God help you forgive.*