



Forgiveness

A Bible Teaching Weekend with Paul Harrington - October 18-19

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **Colossians 3:13**

Introduction

Most of us know people who have experienced hurt and disappointment in their lives which, if left to fester, has produced bitterness and damaged relationships. Truth be known, most of us have personally experienced the negative power of unforgiveness in our lives. At a popular, non-Christian level, even the world around us is more sensitive to the therapeutic benefits of forgiveness (eg Kushner, 'How Good do we have to be? A New Understanding of Guilt and Forgiveness' Ringwood, Viking, 1996)

When we turn to the Bible, forgiveness is central to Christianity. Without the cross and the forgiveness that flows from it there is no gospel. Forgiveness is essential to our reconciliation with God and the way to spending eternity with Him. It is also a key to our relationships with each other as God's people and also our evangelism. Where forgiveness operates in our relationship with each other it distinguishes us from any other group that exists in our society. It is true that only those who have 'been forgiven much' can 'love much'.

I hope you find the following study and the MPC Bible Teaching Weekend encouraging and challenging. They will almost certainly highlight areas and relationships where you need to take action. May God give us grace to understand his forgiveness and allow it to operate in our lives.

Paul Harrington, October 2008

Forgiveness And God

Appetisers...

On Thursday July 15th, 9 year old Sarah Allen was set alight in a park in a suburb in Sydney. Early reports indicated it was the work of some teenage thugs. Sarah suffered burns to 40% of her body.

1. Imagine you are Sarah's parents. Do you think you would be able to forgive her attackers?
2. Would you only be required to forgive if they showed genuine remorse/repentance OR would you (assuming a Christian at this point) have to forgive whatever the case?
3. Would it be more difficult if the perpetrators were never brought to justice and you never discovered who they were?
4. What about Sarah herself. Put yourself in her shoes. Would forgiveness be a 'one-off' thing or a life-time commitment?



October 18-19

Bible Teaching Weekend and Combined Service with Paul Harrington

Paul Harrington is the senior minister of Adelaide's Holy Trinity Anglican Church - the hub of a network of dynamic, Bible teaching churches. He is also a well-known speaker at Christian conventions throughout Australia.

First session 530pm Saturday, followed by BBQ and evening program.

Don't miss Sunday's Combined Service, 930am at Everton Park High School

Main Course...

1. Colossians 3:13 says 'Forgive, as the Lord forgave you' This relates back to forgiveness spoken of in Col. 1:14 and reconciliation in Col.1:21-22. If the model for our forgiveness of one another is God's forgiveness of us – what is God's forgiveness like?

2. Look up the following verses and reflect on what it tells you about God's forgiveness (remember, thinking about context is important).

a) Ex 34:6-7

What does the passage teach us about the character of God?

Why would God be angry in the first place?

How does 'forgiveness and not leaving the guilty unpunished' go together?

b) Acts 13:38, Ephesians 1:7

What is the basis for our forgiveness?

c) In Psalm 51:4, David says (speaking to God) 'against you and you only, have I sinned'. What point is the psalmist making here?

d) How does Jesus' prayer in Luke 23:34 disclose the heart of Jesus towards sinners?

e) Why is Romans 5:1-11 such a great assurance for Christians?

3. Why can't God just forgive us without requiring the death of Jesus on the cross?

4. Read 2 Corinthians 5 and consider the following:

a) How are the ideas of forgiveness and reconciliation related?

b) What do we contribute to the process of reconciliation with God? (esp.5:18)

c) What does 5:21 mean? How is Christ 'made sin' on our behalf? (cf Isaiah 53:4-6; Mark 10:45; 1 Timothy 2:6; Hebrews 9:22; 1 Peter 2:24).

Take Away Value...

When we withhold forgiveness and bear a grudge, what does this tell us about our understanding of God's forgiveness?

In what ways will God's forgiveness vary from ours? Why?

Is there a difference between forgiveness and reconciliation? What?

Repentance is an essential prerequisite for benefiting from the forgiveness of God. Does this mean we don't have to forgive others until they repent?

What can block our appreciation of God's forgiveness?

Are there areas in your own life where you struggle to accept that you are forgiven? How could you address this?

About Holy Trinity Adelaide

Paul Harrington is Senior Minister of Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Adelaide, which is the oldest church in South Australia. In terms of weekly attendance, it's also the largest Anglican church in the state, with 5 services on the North Terrace location each Sunday, 3 Sunday services in two church plants and various other meetings throughout the week. The style of these services ranges through Traditional Anglican, Family and Modern Youth services.

Today it is a large, evangelical and conservative Anglican church. Through its involvement with the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students on tertiary campuses it also has links to the Evangelical Union at Adelaide University and the Uni SA City campuses. Trinity has Sunday school for children in Primary school, a Youth Group (called fusion) for High School Students, a Young adults group (called 1221), a weekday Women's Meeting group (called Terrace Studies), a large number of small bible study groups, and various other groups.

Trinity is part of the Adelaide Diocese and has an increasing number of locally trained staff, particularly trainees through the Ministry Training Strategy and students of the Bible College of South Australia. In 2007 Trinity was involved in initiating 'equip', a training program for Evangelical Anglican Churches in South Australia.

Holy Trinity has planted two daughter churches: Trinity Hills, in the Adelaide Hills and Trinity Bay, in the Adelaide sea-side suburb of Hove. *[source: www.wikipedia.org]*

