

# **FORGIVENESS**

## **Mark 14:43-65**

<sup>43</sup> Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders.

<sup>44</sup> Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.” <sup>45</sup> Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. <sup>46</sup> The men seized Jesus and arrested him. <sup>47</sup> Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

<sup>48</sup> “Am I leading a rebellion,” said Jesus, “that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? <sup>49</sup> Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not

arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.”<sup>50</sup> Then everyone deserted him and fled.

<sup>51</sup> A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him,<sup>52</sup> he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.

<sup>53</sup> They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, the elders and the teachers of the law came together.<sup>54</sup> Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire.

<sup>55</sup> The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any.<sup>56</sup> Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree.

<sup>57</sup> Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: <sup>58</sup> “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with human hands and in three days will build another, not made with hands.’” <sup>59</sup> Yet even then their testimony did not agree.

<sup>60</sup> Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” <sup>61</sup> But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.

Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?”

<sup>62</sup> “I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

<sup>63</sup> The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked. <sup>64</sup> “You

have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?”

They all condemned him as worthy of death. <sup>65</sup> Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, “Prophecy!” And the guards took him and beat him.

## Children's Message:



Does a mother get mad a child for giving them this picture because it looks unrealistic?

Of course not!

This is the best a child can do!

But as we grow up we do better.

We learn more about not only how to draw but to love others and not be selfish or mean.

We become more beautiful on the inside.

In the same way, God is patient with us.

We too need to be patient with others.

We start with messy drawings, but can learn to make things beautiful too.



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## Notables

- The temple soldiers are not the Romans.
- Judas famously betrays Jesus with a kiss.
- A disciple cuts off the ear of the servant of the high priest. (Peter in John's Gospel)
- All Jesus' disciples flee.
- A young man flees away naked - some have guessed that this is Mark, the author of the gospel.
- Peter follows from a distance.
- John has Peter admitted and he enters the house. (John's Gospel)
- A mock trial where one of the "witnesses" agree.
- Jesus is silent but speaks only to indicate that he is indeed the messiah and judge.
- Jesus is then condemned and abused.

# The Forgiveness of Jesus

Jesus practices what he preaches:

*"Love Your Enemies."*

*"Forgive those who sin against you and you heavenly father will forgive you your sins. If you don't, he won't."*

*"Father, forgive them because they don't know what they are doing."*

You might say, well, that was easy for Jesus - he's God. But remember he was fully human and I doubt any of us will ever suffer to the extent he suffered.

So how is it we learn to forgive?

What can we do to follow Jesus in this?

## **Forgiveness Seeks to Understand Others**

- Why did Judas betray Jesus?
- Why did the disciples flee?
- Why do the leading members of the Sanhedrin condemn Jesus?
- Why do people abuse Jesus?

These are important questions to answer.

Bishop T.D. Jakes says, "You cannot forgive what you do not understand."

Understanding is not the same as excusing or condoning bad behaviour.

Understanding allows us to move forward from our reactions of hurt and pain to the next step.

## **Forgiveness Begins with Understanding Ourselves**

Our reactions towards others are dictated by our feelings about ourselves.

The more secure we are in our identity, the better we relate to others.

Jesus knew exactly who he was.

He knew his value was not dependent on what others thought of him but on what God the Father thought of him.

If we listen to the way the world, our peers, our families value people - namely ourselves, you will be insecure.

When we say we have faith in God, it is that we believe he loves us.

This then, allows us not to be sunk by the hurts we incur.

## **Forgiveness Adjusts Expectations of Others**

Understanding allows you to realistically and wisely adjust your expectations of the relationships you are in.

Jesus knew the hearts of those who were around him - Judas, his disciples, the religious and political elites, the chief priests.

He was not surprised by their behaviour.

He was sad about it, even upset, but he knew.

We do not find a baby's constant crying and demand for food and sleep to be offensive because we expect them to cry.

We do find the constant demands of three-year-old to be annoying, but we then take our time to begin to teach them the importance of impulse control.

If someone who is twelve keeps whining about not getting what they want, you know there is something wrong about their psychological and social upbringing and they need to be instructed.

An adult who manipulates others to get what they want is simply living within the human trajectory of sin.

Yes, it can be annoying, stressful, hurtful and can make you mad or frustrated.

That is normal.

But we are not ignorant of others.

# **Forgiveness Helps Our Expectations of Ourselves**

We are not robots without feelings.

We need to have right expectations of ourselves.

We too are sinners and we have broken narratives.

Our reactions and relationships with others range from being great to horrible.

We can be too passive and let people walk all over us.

We can be too aggressive and selfishly impose ourselves on others.

We should be humble and think neither too high nor too low of ourselves.

God and wise friends/advisors are the ones who can help us with this.

These things will help:

## 1. A Life of Prayer

Talking to God and hearing from him is vital to your self-understanding.

God does have a calling upon you to obey and follow him.

Only his expectations are balanced.

But you must cultivate a real experience with God without delusions.

## 2. Advisors, Pastors, Counsellors, Spiritual Directors

These people can help you discern so you don't have delusions!

Every person should have one or more of these.

3. A Loving Community to grow in.

The rubber meets the road when you have real friends who can both encourage and challenge you.

You have the responsibility of returning the favour.

True peace is not the absence of stress but the absence of lies.

## **Forgiveness Lead Us to Freedom of Action**

Forgiveness frees us first from revenge,  
bitterness and blame.

These things can paralyse us and keep us from  
truly redeeming work.

Setting boundaries is one of those actions.

We should not be with people who  
constantly hurt us.

We should not silently and passively "take it."  
It can be unhealthy and unjust, let alone self-  
destructive to do so.

Speaking the Truth without Anger

"I felt hurt." "I feel hurt when you..."

We can move forward in love.

Out of being a victim.

We reclaim our place as a person.

The opposite of fear is love.

Always has been.

## **Questions:**

Who do you have to forgive?

From whom do you need forgiveness?

Write their name on a piece of paper and leave it at the foot of the cross.

We will burn them on Good Friday.

## **[Video on Forgiveness]**

Conversation