

Some people just don't deserve to be forgiven-

Yet, when Jesus was asked by his friends, the disciples- "teach us to pray" He said- pray like this-

Father, forgive US our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

How do we forgive? Is there someone, right now –you need to forgive? **In my life, there have been people who I have had to ask for God's power to forgive, but I can't compare my pain to Corrie Ten Boom who one night was called to forgive a man who had done so much evil.**

Corrie and her dad were watchmakers in Holland during WWII. She and her family hid Jewish people in their home, and there is a book about their lives called THE HIDING PLACE.

Eventually they were caught out and sent to a concentration camp- She survived, her Father and Sister did not.

She wrote the book and travelled the world speaking of God's love and how even in the darkness of the Concentration Camp- God was with her

Her sister Betsy was killed at one of those camps.

One night, Corrie was asked to do the unimaginable- forgive

She said-

"It was in a church in Munich that she saw him—a balding, heavyset man in a gray overcoat, a brown felt hat clutched between his hands. People were filing out of the basement room where she had just spoken, moving along the rows of wooden chairs to the door at the rear. It was 1947 and she had come from Holland to Germany with the message ... God forgives.

"It was the truth they needed most to hear in that bitter, bombed-out land, and she gave them her favorite mental picture.

'When we confess our sins,' she said, 'God casts them into the deepest ocean, gone forever. ...' ..

"The solemn faces stared back at her, not quite daring to believe.

After her talk, people stood up in silence, collected their coats in silence and in silence left the room.

"And that's when I saw him, (she said) working his way forward. One moment I saw the overcoat and the brown hat; the next, a blue uniform and a cap with its skull and crossbones.

It came back with a rush: the huge room with its harsh overhead lights; the pathetic pile of dresses and shoes in the center of the floor; the shame of walking naked past this man. I could see my sister's frail form ahead of me, ribs sharp beneath the parchment skin.

This man had been a guard at Ravensbruck concentration camp where she and her sister were sent.

"Now he was in front of me, hand thrust out: 'a fine message, Fräulein! How good it is to know that, as you say, all our sins are at the bottom of the sea!'

Corrie continued- I had spoken so glibly of forgiveness.

She fumbled with her pocketbook rather than take that hand.

Corrie realized He did not remember her of course—how could he remember one prisoner among those thousands of women?

She says-

"But I remembered him and the leather crop swinging from his belt. I was face-to-face with one of my captors and my blood seemed to freeze.

" 'You mentioned Ravensbruck in your talk,' he was saying, 'I was a guard there.' He did not remember her.

'But since that time,' he went on, 'I have become a Christian. I know that God has forgiven me for the cruel things I did there, but I would like to hear it from your lips as well. Fräulein,' again the hand came out—'will you forgive me?'

Corrie "And I stood there—I whose sins had again and again been forgiven—and I could not forgive.

Her sister Betsie had died in that place—
Did he think could he erase Betsy's slow terrible death simply for the asking?

It could not have been many seconds that he stood there—hand held out—but to me Corrie seemed hours as she wrestled with the most difficult thing she had ever had to do.

BUT Corrie continues, I had to do it—I knew that. The message that God forgives has a condition: that we forgive those who have injured us.

"I knew it not only as a commandment of God, but as a daily experience. Since the end of the war had ended, she had had a home in Holland for victims of Nazi

brutality. Those who were able to forgive their former enemies were able also to return to the outside world and rebuild their lives, no matter what the physical scars were.

But those who nursed their bitterness remained invalids. It was as simple and as horrible as that.

“And still I stood there (she said) with the coldness clutching my heart. Recognizing forgiveness is not an emotion—I knew that too. Forgiveness is an act of the will.

Help me!’ she prayed silently. ‘I can lift my hand. I can do that much. You supply the feeling.’

“And so woodenly, mechanically, she thrust her hand into the one stretched out to her. And as she did, an incredible thing took place.

She remembers the current started in her shoulder, raced down my arm, sprang into their joined hands. And then healing warmth seemed to flood her whole being, bringing tears to her eyes.

“ ‘I forgive you, brother!’ she cried. ‘With all my heart!’
“For a long moment we grasped each other’s hands, the former guard and the former prisoner.

I had never known God’s love so intensely, as I did then”

I heard this story for the first time more than 2 decades ago, but it has always stayed with me.

We can choose to forgive and when we do – we are no longer slaves, we are free.

But praying for forgiveness is not something we do once,

We need pray each day, many times a day- because we need Jesus.
Emma reminded us of that last week. Give us this day our daily bread – give us.... today, Jesus

If you have not been with us these last few weeks- we are in a series called “40 days” where we are looking at the Prayer Jesus taught us to pray – many of us call it the Lord’s prayer- we find it in

Luke 11 :1

Once Jesus was in a certain place praying. As he finished, one of his disciples came to him and said, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”

2 Jesus said, "This is how you should pray

Today as we pray as we have each week....by reading this prayer together.
Would you join me now as we pray it out loud?

*"Father, may your name be kept holy.
May your Kingdom come soon.*

3 Give us each day the food we need

*4 and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And don't let us yield to temptation.*

This series is changing my heart and my understanding of prayer.
In our first week in this series-Mike reminded us that we can pray, at all times
with words and without words...but pray, just pray and pray first.

John reminded us Prayer is worship – and that God is Holy. We need to
recognize that God is holy & respond with worship.

And last week, Emma reminded us we can ask God to meet our daily needs.
Give us today, our daily bread- and Give us Jesus

It was a good reminder to me, that sometimes we are God's hands and feet and
we may be His answer to a request that someone is praying for right now.

Today we will once again look at Luke 11 and see Jesus teach us that we are to
Pray for forgiveness and we are to forgive others.

Leave today knowing that **forgiveness is not foolishness**- when we choose to
forgive, God's kingdom advances.

The kingdom of God advancing is why we are excited to invite friends to
Easter....their seed packet on your seats have been prayed over by our prayer
team.

God desires for Harbor is that we would be people who live in the loving truth of
the gospel.. that says no matter who you are, what you have done or what has
been done to you- God's plan is to redeem the brokenness in our lives and
recreate us in His image-

*if we confess our sin He is faithful and just and will purify us from all
unrighteousness I John 1:9*

What does forgiveness even mean?

FORGIVING : to stop feeling anger toward someone who has done something wrong, to stop blaming someone and to stop requiring payment for something

Forgiveness has many facets- but today we look at one of them.

1. How do we choose to forgive, rather than require those who have hurt us to repay us.

I think our first step is that **we choose to forgive when we recognize that God has forgiven us.**

What comes to mind when we talk about forgiveness?

Have you thought of the meaning of this phrase

*forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.*

Have you even been forgiven for something you have done?

We come together each week to worship the God who made us, and loves us and has forgiven us.

But we also say and do things that hurt each other.

Yet, we are called to forgive. Forgiving means we allow God to be God and judge as only He can, with righteousness and justice.

We forgive because we have been forgiven.
And when we believe that God is Holy & He alone can judge.

We forgive... because God freely forgives us.

Not because we deserve it. His love and forgiveness are an undeserved gift.

And now, we have a command to forgive those who sin against us.

Forgiveness starts when we freely receive God's forgiveness.

When we understand what God has done for us, we extend this forgiveness to others, and to ourselves.

It is not foolishness to obey God and forgive.

However, Please hear me when I say this- Do not confuse forgiveness and abuse. We need to have healthy boundaries and stay away from people who injure us-physically, mentally and emotionally.
Forgiveness is not and confusing Love with abuse. I Cor 13 says Love is patient, kind, not rude, it does not delight in evil, keeps no record of wrong...

If someone is hurting you- please leave that situation and get help. We have a Compassionate Care team and are here for you.
We have a prayer team that wants to meet with you and pray for you.

If you are hurting someone, would you please get help? We have a recovery group that meets on Wednesday nights and can help with your hurts and hang-ups.

Forgiveness is not allowing someone to injure you- that would be foolishness.

Forgiveness is not foolishness.

Forgiveness is choosing to let God be judge and releasing the power to hurt someone back.

Forgiveness is not foolishness.

It is a choice we make when we believe God loves us and wants what is best for us. He knows that in order to be free we must forgive ourselves, and forgive those who have hurt us.

When we do not forgive ourselves or others- it leads to sickness, anxiety and death... Corrie saw it first hand.

But we have all seen people who chose to remain in the pain of unforgiveness...bitterness literally makes us sick.

That is why Jesus told us when we pray ... forgive.
He loves us and came to bring us life and life that is abundant.

We are not wrong to choose to forgive.
It is not foolish. It is a brave and strong choice.

We need to recognize that
Forgiveness is a choice. How do we do this?

The good news is we aren't left to figure it out on our own. When Jesus' followers said to him: "Teach us how to pray," (Luke 11:1-13) he did just that. To Jesus, prayer was his lifeline, it was direct communication with his Heavenly Father,

In that prayer he gave us the words to pray.

*forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.*

An author who has impacted my understanding of forgiveness is RT Kendall and his book total forgiveness

He said the key for forgiving, for him has been to **read Luke 6:3 7 every day:**
"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."

Repeat- forgive and you will be forgiven

One key to forgiveness is recognizing that *just as we need to ask For God's daily provision-* we need God's help to forgive each day-

Forgiveness is a daily need

We need to Pray when we forgive, because Jesus told us to
"But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matt. 5:44).

I have learned to pray for those who hurt me, when I feel hurt.

The prayer I pray comes from
Numbers 4:24-26 God bless and keep you (and I say their name), would you make your face shine on them and Give them your peace,

As Mike said a few weeks ago, we need to pray with words, without words- at all times, Just pray and pray first. As we begin to pray for those who have hurt us, we will soon learn forgiveness requires daily prayer.

Whether it is a close relative or a complete stranger who hurt you-
We pray and forgive and then one day, something will trigger the pain and cause us to want to be the judge and jury of that person-once again.

The Lord's prayer has taught us to pray each time the pain returns, and to choose to forgive.

When we choose to forgive, we allow God to be the judge and we ask for His love to be what rules in our hearts

If we want peace, we must forgive- over and over.
Today, tomorrow, this year, and next.

Total forgiveness is a lifelong commitment. Some days will be easier than others. There will come a time when you think you are completely over it and have won a total victory-only to find the very next day something happens that reminds you of what they did and the utter injustice that they will be unpunished and never exposed.

**If we want peace, we must forgive- over and over.
Today, tomorrow, this year, and next.
– RT KENDALL**

Forgiveness is an integral part of love. We cannot truly be free to love somebody if we hold resentment or bitterness in our hearts towards them. I don't know what pain you have had to live through. My life may look easy and simple, but I have walked through pain and have had many people say and do things that have injured me.

It may seem like the smart thing to do is build a wall around my heart – but that is foolishness. Forgiveness is not foolishness.

Jesus understood how important it was.

A teacher of the Jewish law once posed a question to Jesus. "Which commandment is the greatest of all?" Jesus replied that it is to *"love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength."* (Mark 12:28-30 WEB) and the second is to "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31).

How important is forgiveness? Can you think of anything more difficult than to be paralyzed 2,000 years ago. You could only stay alive if there were people to care for you.

When we see a paralyzed man brought to Jesus, Jesus first forgives him, then heals him. That is how important forgiveness is...

He forgives him Then he heals him(If need a Bible- they are a gift)

Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralyzed Man

2 *A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging*

through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

Imagine this scene, if the man fell off the mat while being lowered down, he would be injured even more than he already was, and he would be unable to help himself back onto the mat.

If he wasn't healed, he would lie there, humiliated, with many people staring at him. But the man had enough faith to believe that it was possible for Jesus to heal him, and so did his friends.

6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? 9 Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? 10 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, 11 "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." 12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this

Jesus knew that just to heal this man physically would not be enough.

Some Bible scholars believe that Jesus chose to forgive the man's sins before healing him for two reasons: to encourage the man that his sins wouldn't stand in the way of healing (at that time, many people blamed sick or injured people for their affliction, thinking that it was caused by their sins), and to let the religious leaders in the crowd know that he had the authority to forgive people's sins.

If this was your son, can you imagine the joy of seeing him walk?

Yet Jesus shows us the greater healing occurred on the inside-

That is what God wants for you and me.

To give up the burdens we have been carrying and let God be God. There is no other way to do life, we must forgive.

"If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you... HE has offered us this free gift. Our sins paid in full- with the blood of Jesus. A gift, nothing we have earned. We are forgiven.

When we believe that, We forgive.

God would not ask us to forgive to make us miserable- He loves us. He asks us to forgive, because it is not our job to judge.

We can't do it with justice.
So we trust that God will care for us.

Our question today is can we trust God with our pain? This is what faith looks like.

Being sure of what we hope for and certain for what we do not see.

When Jesus tells us In John 10:10 that He came so we would have life and have It abundantly, does that ring true with you today?

Are you feeling tired, or worn out or exhausted? I know that I have been feeling that way. This week I spent a day in the word and prayer and was reminded of Matthew 11:30.

MY joy is found in Christ. His yoke is easy, because He is walking with me. He never asks me to do anything alone. He is with me. It was His power that brought joy and peace to Corrie. She was faithful in little. He supplies the strength for the weary.

Carrying unforgiveness within exhaust us.

RT Kendall speaks to the stages of growth in our faith as we forgive.

Maybe a first step for you today is to ask God for the faith to forgive

Maybe today for the first time you will say in your heart-
I forgive you

When you do, You are choosing to obey God. You can pick a verse, and say out loud- "- I forgive you – Jesus has forgiven me and I choose to forgive you.

As this becomes a practice, we will be more aware that we have been forgiven... soon we can't help but pray for our enemy.

God knows that as we do this, our faith grows and our joy returns.

Last month we talked about another upside down rule of the kingdom of God-Giving.

We may first give because God has told us, but soon our heart begins to long for what God longs for and it becomes a delight to Give freely.

God is for our joy- forgiveness leads to our joy. (repeat)

The truth is – no matter how hard we try to be the judge of the world...our pain will not affect those who hurt us- if we are up all night angry and having an imaginary conversation with the people who hurt us- it does not affect them, they are probably sleeping.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

1 John 1:9 (NIV)

Corrie Ten Boom took a big step of faith that day and God multiplied her handshake She went on to preach the gospel and live in peace. She died in 1983 and impacted millions of people around the world by forgiving-not because that guard deserved it. But because God called her to forgive, make a choice that led to life.

We have no greater example than Jesus who forgave those who betrayed him, hurt Him and crucified him

Mark 15:29-30

Jesus asked the father to forget them-Even though they shouted with *glee-crucify him*

"When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.'

The people who celebrated Jesus on Palm Sunday –crucified him on Friday. The story does not end at the cross. When Jesus entered our world, he stepped into our brokenness. He destroyed the power of sin when he walked out of the tomb. Sitting at the right hand of God the Father- He is restoring the broken things in this world.

From death to life, from wrong to right
He is making all things beautiful
Because Mercy triumphs over judgment

We see Mercy in Acts 2, Peter preaches to many who were there that day.
3,000 believed in Jesus that day!

Acts 2: 36-41

36 *"So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!"*

37 *Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?"*

38 *Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away[h]—all who have been called by the Lord our God."*

40 *Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation!"*

41 *Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.*

Jesus took on every sin of mine. Every thought w, word or deed that separated you and I from the God who made us and loves us has been forgiven.

His blood paid the price for our forgiveness. When I think about what He gave for me, I am overwhelmed by His great love. I take that first baby step of faith and pray for the one who has injured me.

So a prayer for today may be pray- Thank you Jesus –
you forgive my sins, Thank you.

Help me to forgive those who sin against me.

When I started the day saying some people do not deserve to be forgiven. What came to your mind?

Child abusers, Murderers, unkind relatives, Former friends who are now enemies-

Deep in your heart did you think-They just don't deserve forgiveness.
They aren't even sorry.

But Jesus said- when you pray – pray like this.

Father- Forgive us, as we forgive others
Our choice is to obey.

The truth is I do not deserve to be forgiven, no one does. But God loves me anyway. And he commands us to forgive.

The Sidewalk prophets say it this way
I am the man who yelled out from the crowd
For your blood to be spilled

I turned away with a smile on my face
With sin in my heart
I bury your grace- but you love me anyway.

God's love for us is beyond our comprehension. Forgiving others *saves us* from the consequences of living with of an unforgiving heart

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven" (Luke 6:37).

Remember, forgiveness does not justify the deed or the person,
Forgiving others makes a way for our own healing to begin.

Total forgiveness takes place when we ask God the father to forgive those who hurt us.

The Message of the New Testament-
Is that God is reconciling the world to himself in Christ
Not counting men's sins against them

Our job now is to be the messenger of reconciliation- it is why this church was planted..to call people back to Jesus

A spirit of unforgiveness complicates and compromises our daily walk with God.

Forgiving others releases us from anger and allows us to receive the healing we need. The reason God has told us to forgive-is He does not want anything to stand between us and Him.

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

Forgiveness is not foolishness

Forgiveness is releasing the bitterness in our heart over what someone has done

Forgiveness is for our heart

It doesn't mean we will spend vacations with people who have injured us- or even be in relationship with them, reconciliation may not occur.

Forgiveness is not approval of sin

It is not excusing or explaining away behavior

Forgiveness does not mean closing our eyes to those who continue to harm others.

Boundaries are important and necessary.

Forgiveness is simply realizing we can live with bitterness or peace, we cannot have both (repeat)

Maybe today you need someone to pray with you...join us here after the service and we will pray with you.

Fill out a connection card, we will be praying for you.

Join us in Tuesday nights at 7:30. We will pray with you.

Screen.

As we close today- I am going to put our closing prayer on the

We will have a few moments to ask God what our next step will be

I am asking you to take a big step of faith and pray this out loud. As we finish, our worship team will return, take those moments of quiet to pray silently.

Father God, I need your help to forgive

I believe there is power in the name of Jesus to break every chain. Just as you have freely forgiven me, with your power I forgive the one who has sinned against me.

Father, I ask you to forgive me for hurting others out of my own hurt and to heal my relationships with others.

I pray all of this in Jesus' precious name and by whom all forgiveness and healing is possible.

Thank you for loving me in ways I'll never comprehend.

In Jesus' name, Amen.