

but the environment
around you.

around you, never the
other way.

In our series on
'Walking with God' on
key theme was to ask
Jesus what to do. When
hurt by another person
or a crippling situation;
don't react, ask Jesus to
heal you, to love you
more than the hurt, and
then to show you how
to live the new heart of
love you have into that
situation. Talk about
living free!

Today remember in
Jesus you have a new
heart of love, let every
situation be an
opportunity to let it
grow and mature,
shaping the world

Let us pray.
Jesus thank you from
the bottom of our hearts
for your love grace and
mercy, that you have
changed us so that we
can love like you in
every situation. The
hurt and pains in our
lives so that we don't
simply react but that we
create your love, living
out your forgiveness,
never going what
people deserve, but
always paying the price
to give then what they
need to be all that
you've dreamed
possible for them.
Amen.

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am

Pastor: Tim 0427326553

Edmund 0429041957



Reaching Out with the Love of Jesus that All my Know, Worship & Grow in Christ

11 September 2011

FORGIVENESS

Matthew 18:21-35



In today's Gospel
reading Peter discusses
with Jesus how often he
should forgive. Peter
graciously suggests
seven times.

Today we also
remember the terrorist
attack on the World
Trade centre in the
USA. Would Peter still
have suggested seven
times. Seven times
allow terrorists to fly
planes full of people
into high-rise buildings
full of people. Allow
seven buildings to be
destroyed with
thousands of people
dying before seeking
revenge. How does that
make you feel?

"How many times shall
I forgive someone who
sins against me?"

To answer this question
Jesus told the story of
the unforgiving servant.
What happened to the

servant after he'd been
forgiven a debt he
could never repay?
Everything he held dear
was going to be taken
away. All he could do
was throw himself on
the king's mercy. And
amazingly the king
valued the servant more
than the debt.

Who ended up paying
the cost for the servant
to go free? Last week it
struck me that love is
always at the givers
expense; free to the one
who receives that they
might be blessed. The
giver pays that the
receiver gains. Of
course it was the king
who was willing to pay
what it cost for the
servant to go free. What
did the king stand to
gain? Nothing!

'How many times
would I forgive if there
was nothing in it for
me?'

The king forgives the
servant. What changes
do we see in the
servant? The sad part of
the story is we don't
see any change. He
encounters someone
who owes him and
immediately seeks to
get what is owed him.
No compassion. No
mercy. No
thankfulness. No
change. After all its his
money, and he's got a
right to have what's his;
doesn't he?

Jesus concludes; "This
is how my heavenly
Father will treat each of
you unless you forgive
a brother or sister from
your heart." (Matt.
18:35) Jesus is asking
Peter; 'What is at the
core of your heart?'

The heart of the king is
shown to be gracious
and merciful. The heart
of the king is shown to

be loving and compassionate. He's prepared to pay the expense of love that the other person might freely receive and be blessed.

So I'm left asking myself what do my actions reveal about my heart?

What does Peter's question reveal about his heart; 'How many times do I have to wait before I can act'. To me it reveals a heart that is still being shaped by the person causing the hurt.

When I simply respond to what is being done to me; who is in control of my life? The very person I'm angry at. Can anyone see something unhealthy about this way of living; letting what you know is wrong and hurtful shape you!

Have you ever noticed that when you respond to a hurt by hurting

another person the same way you're condemning yourself? You've recognised it is wrong; it's hurt you. You've judged that action as wrong. Why would you want to repeat it? Why would I want to copy something I've quit rightly judged as wrong? Even if I have to wait till the

Forgive from the Heart.

seventh occasion before I get my shot. Why copy what I've quit rightly judged as wrong? To me that says there is something wrong with my heart that I need to deal with. I need healing. I'm not acting out of a heart of love and compassion. I'm not acting out of a heart of grace and mercy; seeking to pay the price of love that the other person might benefit, for their good.

In the reading from Exodus today I'm reminded of what a hard-hearted produces. Pharaoh was hard-hearted. He didn't want the Israelites to be set free, they were too valuable as cheap labour. It was going to cost him way too much; and what was in it for him. Nothing, he was being asked to pay the price, so that the Israelites might be set free and blessed. Pharaoh couldn't

see any good reason to freely give up this resource. He had other cities to build, other monuments to construct to his glory.

What did it cost Pharaoh to be hard-hearted?

When I'm hard-hearted what does it cost me? When I don't forgive but hang onto a hurt. When I nurture a grudge. When I replay in my mind something that was unfair. What

does it cost me? Pharaoh ended up destroying his nation, and causing the death of many people. And many of those people would have been near and dear to him. What an horrific cost.

Am I being hard-hearted or is Jesus shaping my heart? Where is the core of my action coming from?

Here is the point of forgiveness. It is Jesus freeing me to act from his love and not the hurt done to me. Jesus specialises in heart transplants, so that his heart of love beats within us, revealing itself in the actions and choices we make.

Jesus wasn't interested in counting how often I forgive before I act on a hurt done to me. Jesus hopes I never simply react to a hurt done to me. Jesus desperately doesn't want my heart to be shaped by

revenge, fury, hate, bitterness, frustration. Thank God that in Jesus I have been forgiven, so that now I can live from a heart that beats with Jesus life giving blood in me. Thank God that in Jesus I can now live from a heart full of his love, his grace and mercy, so that these

In Jesus we can love from God's heart.

wonderful characteristics of Jesus find expression in my actions. So in the Lord's Prayer we pray; 'Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.' Father forgive us from your heart of love, as in Jesus we are empowered to forgive from a changed heart, reflecting a new character. Thank God that Jesus we are changed, changed into the Father's loved

children in whom he delights. Delights to love with all his heart, sharing his life with them, with us. That we grow into healthy people who reflect his nature and character. Today I hope you take this one thought home; forgive from the heart, because in Jesus you now have a heart of love.

I think the world has seen enough hurt, hate, anger, revenge, bitterness, stubbornness, resentment and hard-heartedness. I think the world needs love, and in Jesus you're the very people who have his heart of love to give. What a wonderful and precious blessing.

Forgiveness is Jesus' gift to keep our hearts love, just like him. So today remember to forgive from the heart of love you have in Jesus, letting him shape you, and not only you