Forgiving is Giving

AS WE GATHER

“To err is human, to forgive divine”

This familiar saying is by Alexander Pope. Although it is not a quote from the Bible it is an accurate summary of biblical teaching about forgiveness. Sinners sin and do not forgive. Yet God forgives us, and we act in godlike (divine) ways when we also forgive.

Pope’s brilliant saying summarizes two important truths from the Bible. The first is a truth about US: We are sinners, hard-wired by the effects of original sin to do wrong: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Doing wrong includes holding onto grudges, anger, bitterness and looking for ways to get even, not to make peace.

The other truth is about GOD: God loves us and forgives a mountain of “wickedness, rebellion and sin” when we turn to Him in repentance and faith because Jesus Christ has paid for our sins on the cross. But God’s forgiveness doesn’t end there, merely with God forgiving us. His forgiveness is multiplied and flows through us when we forgive others. Forgiving others is “normal activity” for those touched and transformed by grace.

Though we are sinners from conception, the Holy Spirit transforms and gives us the capacity to love like God does: to forgive even the unforgiveable in others, as God has done for us through Christ. In fact, those led by the Holy Spirit have the command to pass on this divine attribute: “Freely you have received; freely give.” (Matthew 10:8). Jesus even put forgiveness into his model Lord’s Prayer: “Forgive us our sins AS we forgive those who have sinned against us.” Forgiving others is part and parcel of what it means to be “reborn” in Christ. Our old sinful nature which is inclined toward retribution is no longer in charge. When we “put on Christ,” our new nature, a divine one, acts in divine ways. We no longer revel in anger or devise ways to strike back. We freely GIVE to others what Christ has freely GIVEN to us. That’s the theme of pastor’s message today: “Forgiving is for-GIVING.”
PRELUDE  “Think About His Love” Walt Harrah

Duet: Pastors Larson and Zehnder, soloists

CHORUS: Think about His love Think about His goodness
Think about His grace That's brought us through
For as high as the heaven's above So great is the measure
Of our Father's love Great is the measure Of our Father's love

How could I forget His love
How could I forget His mercy
He satisfies He satisfies He satisfies my desires CHORUS

Even when I've strayed away
His love has sought me out And found me
He satisfies He satisfies He satisfies my desires CHORUS

GATHERING SONG

WHO YOU SAY I AM Hillsongs

Who am I that the highest King
Would welcome me?
I was lost but He brought me in
Oh His love for me Oh His love for me

CHORUS: Who the Son sets free
Oh is free indeed
I'm a child of God Yes I am

Free at last, He has ransomed me
His grace runs deep
While I was a slave to sin Jesus died for me
Yes He died for me CHORUS

In my Father's house There's a place for me I'm a child of God Yes I am

I am chosen Not forsaken
I am who You say I am
You are for me Not against me
I am who You say I am

I am chosen Not forsaken
I am who You say I am
You are for me Not against me
I am who You say I am who You say I am CHORUS

In my Father's house There's a place for me I'm a child of God Yes I am
PASTORAL GREETING

OPENING SONG  THE WAY (NEW HORIZON)  Smith/Bashta/Barrett

Through every battle Through every heartbreak Through every circumstance
I believe That You are my fortress Oh, You are my portion
And You are my hiding place, oh I believe You are

CHORUS: The way, the truth, the life I believe You are The way, the truth, the life I believe (You are)

Through every blessing Through every promise Through every breath I take
I believe That You are Provider You are Protector
And You are the One I love, I believe you are CHORUS

It's a new horizon and I'm set on You
And You meet me here today with mercies that are new
All my fears and doubts, they can all come too
Because they can't stay long when I believe (You are) CHORUS

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES  Psalm 119:41, 49–50, 81, 89–90a

Pastor: Let Your steadfast love come to me, O LORD,
People: Your salvation according to Your promise.
Pastor: Remember Your word to Your servant, in which You have made me hope.
People: This is my comfort in my affliction, that Your promise gives me life.
Pastor: My soul longs for Your salvation;
People: I hope in Your word.
Pastor: Forever, O LORD, Your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.
People: Your faithfulness endures to all generations.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
People: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

Pastor: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
People: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by
what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the * Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

FIRST READING: Ephesians 4:29-5:2

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE: I John 2:1-9

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God’s love is truly made
complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did. Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard. Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and in you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining. Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

Congregation, please rise for the Holy Gospel.


“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” He also told them this parable: “Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher. ‘Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to You, O Christ.
CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SONG OF THE DAY  WHEN PEACE LIKE A RIVER  LSB 763

SERMON  “Forgiving Is For Giving”  Pastor John Larson


PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

Pastor:  The peace of the Lord be with you always.
People:  And also with you.

OFFERING  COME, THOU FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING  LSB 686

HOLY COMMUNION AT ASCENSION

The Lord, our Host, invites to his Supper those who are baptized into the Christian faith, confess him as Savior, have been instructed and have examined themselves, truly repent of sins, believe the Risen Lord is present in the sacrament with his true body and blood, and resolve to live faithfully and obediently. For those with an intolerance to alcohol, the center ring of the tray contains grape juice. Gluten free wafers are available to those with wheat allergies. Children who have not been instructed, yet desire a blessing, are invited to come forward with arms crossed. When receiving the bread and wine, the communicant may respond with “Amen!”, a word of affirmation and belief.
PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.  
People: And also with you.  
Pastor: Lift up your hearts.  
People: We lift them to the Lord.  
Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

2 Timothy 4:22  
[Colossians 3:1]  
[Psalm 136]


Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✉ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given
thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

**LORD’S PRAYER**  *Matthew 6:9–13*  
*Text found in the back of the Hymnal.*

**DISTRIBUTION SONGS**

**JESUS PAID IT ALL**  Grape/Nifong

And I hear the Savior say Thy strength indeed is small  Child of weakness watch and pray Find in Me thine all in all  
**CHORUS:** 'Cause Jesus paid it all  All to Him I owe  Sin had left a crimson stain  He washed it white as snow  
Lord now indeed I find Thy pow'r and Thine alone  Can change the leper's spots And melt the heart of stone  
**CHORUS**  
And when before the throne I stand in Him complete  Jesus died my soul to save My lips shall still repeat  
**CHORUS**

**WE BELIEVE**  *The Newsboys*

In this time of desperation—When all we know is doubt and fear  There is only one foundation—We believe we believe  In this broken generation—When all is dark You help us see  There is only one salvation—We believe we believe  
**CHORUS:**  We believe in God the Father—We believe in Jesus Christ  We believe in the Holy Spirit—And He's given us new life  We believe in the crucifixion—We believe that He conquered death  We believe in the resurrection—And He's coming back again  
So let our faith be more than anthems—Greater than the songs we sing  In our weakness and temptations—We believe we believe  
**CHORUS**  
Let the lost be found—and the dead be raised In the here and now let love invade  Let the church live loud our God we'll say—We believe we believe  And the gates of hell will not prevail  For the pow'r of God has torn the veil  Now we know Your love will never fail  We believe we believe  
He's coming back again—He's coming back again  We believe we believe
BLESS THE LORD (10,000 REASONS) Myrin/Redman

Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul; Worship His holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul; I'll worship Your holy name.
The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning,
It's time to sing Your song again.
Whatever may pass, and whatever lies before me,
Let me be singing when the evening comes.

ALL:

CHORUS: Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul;
Worship His holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul;
I'll worship Your holy name.

You're rich in love and You're slow to anger.
Your name is great and Your heart is kind.
For all Your goodness, I will keep on singing;
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find. CHORUS

And on that day, when my strength is failing,
The end draws near, and my time has come;
Still, my soul will sing Your praise unending,
Ten thousand years, and then forevermore! CHORUS X2

Worship Your holy name, Lord, I'll worship Your holy name.
Sing like never before, O my soul; I'll worship Your holy name,
Worship Your holy name, Worship Your holy name.
GENERAL COMMUNION BLESSING

The body & the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ

strengthen you and keep you
in His grace.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

People: Amen.

CLOSING SONG  EVERLASTING GOD  Brown—Riley

Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord
Wait upon the Lord We will wait upon the Lord
Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord
Wait upon the Lord We will wait upon the Lord

Our God You reign forever Our Hope our strong Deliv’rer

CHORUS: You are the everlasting God The everlasting God
You do not faint You won’t grow weary
You’re the defender of the weak You comfort those in need
You lift us up on wings like eagles

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Go in peace as you serve the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

CONGREGATIONAL CONCERNS
He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk even as He walked.

1 John 2:6
Serving in Worship

OFFICIANT and CELEBRANT
Pastor John Larson

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES
Michael Zehnder

ORGAN ASSISTANT
Diana Gaide

YOUTH BAND
Ashley Boeding, Brooke Boeding, Larry Boeding, Lilly Brinkman, Kayden Erling, Will Kopriva

ELDER
Roger Gaide
8:00
Don Loptien
10:00

LECTOR
Scott Luethy
8:00
Ted Lemke
10:00

ACOLYTE
Ann Ranisate
8:00
Espen Erling
10:00

USHERS
Hank Peepgrass, Members of the Congregation
8:00
Jason Dierking, Members of the Congregation
10:00

SERVER
Margo Pasha
10:00

ALTAR GUILD
Charmaine Rohde, Sharon Seible, Deb Shiflet

FLOWERS
An anonymous donor

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