

Weekly Devotion - Forgiven and Forgotten

January 11, 2023

Scripture: Psalm 103: 8-12 (The Voice)

The Eternal is compassionate and merciful. When we cross all the lines, He is patient with us. When we struggle against Him, He lovingly stays with us—changing, convicting, prodding; He will not constantly criticize, nor will He hold a grudge forever. Thankfully, God does not punish us for our sins and depravity as we deserve. In His mercy, He tempers justice with peace. Measure how high heaven is above the earth; God's wide, loving, kind heart is greater for those who revere Him. You see, God takes all our crimes—our seemingly inexhaustible sins—and removes them. As far as east is from the west, He removes them from us.

Reflection

One of my friends cries every time he comes to receive communion. He is overwhelmed by the grace of the moment. When I asked him once what was happening in his soul during communion, he said, "knowing all my imperfections and sins, this invitation to dine with Jesus is incredible. I do not have to earn the privilege of God's love, forgiveness and healing! God meets me here and hugs me with grace."

Each communion, my hope is to soak in the enormity of what God is offering. As we focus this month on forgiveness, communion is a glorious way to focus on the grace and mercy God offers us no matter what we do, what we think, or where we go. Psalm 103 reminds us how God looks at our sins and struggles. When we struggle with resentments, hurts, grudges and our own unfaithfulness, God is remarkably compassionate, merciful and patient. God's wide, loving, kind heart is open to redeem us and transform us. When we ask for help, hope, and forgiveness, God faithfully offers it and even forgets our sins. This is amazing grace! In remembrance of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, we see the extravagant lengths God will go to offer us forgiveness and eternal hope.

Questions to Ponder

- Are you carrying a grudge or a personal sin that is weighing you down? What struggles and sins do you need God to heal and forget?
- When was the last time you really soaked in the incredible nature of what is offered during communion (grace, connection, forgiveness, healing, hope ...)? If you were unable to receive communion Sunday, please contact the church and we will make communion available for you.

Music of Communion

- Contemporary Song: The Table by Chris Tomlin,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peeqJ1bmT_w
- Traditional Hymn: This is a Day of New Beginnings,
<https://youtu.be/y630UrAOLPw>

Prayer

God, open me up to the fullness of your grace, mercy and forgiveness. Help me see anything holding me back from truly living in your love. Help me release grudges and resentments. Help me to ask for and truly receive your healing grace. In the saving power of Jesus Christ, amen.