**Seven -** "**Father forgive them"/"you will be with me**"

**Luke 23:34-43;**

**March 12, 2023**

**DAILY DEVOTION**

Find a rhythm in God’s word this week! Follow this 5 day plan on your own or with your group!

<https://www.bible.com/en/reading-plans/22635-forgiving-what-you-cant-forget-a-5-day-challenge>

**INSPIRATION**

“We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies.” – Martin Luther King, Jr.

**ICE BREAKER**

1. What is one historical event you would have liked to witness and why?
2. Which Bible story of Jesus forgiving someone would you have liked to witness and why?

**DEEP DIVE**

**Read this out loud**

An excerpt from the message this week:

“We are so good at keeping score – even when we don’t keep score we keep score. You have probably been to a little league T-ball game – it is baseball without pitching – you put the ball on the tee and hit it – hopefully – not always - but it really doesn’t matter if you hit it or not – everyone is a winner because no one will keep score – except the kids and the parents.

At the end of the game everyone knows who scored the most runs – you might try to convince your team that they are all winners – but everyone knows – not today. When we keep a record – someone wins, and someone loses.”

**Read Luke 23:34-43 and then answer the following questions:**

1. Do you find it easy or hard to forgive someone? Why?
2. Jesus comes to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. According Luke 19:38 Jesus is met with worship as he enters the town, but not by everyone. How would you describe Jesus circumstances from Luke 23:34-43? What in this passage makes you think about how hard it would be to forgive these people?
3. In Luke 19:34 and 40-43, what was the basis for Jesus’ forgiveness? Jesus saw God’s big picture as the crowd did not understand they were really crucifying the Son of God. Jesus focused on forgiving from God’s perspective. The criminal was forgiven because he realized Jesus was sinless and did not deserve death and he asked for forgiveness. In both instances, forgiveness was based on the bigger picture of God’s plan and forgiveness through Jesus. If you find it hard to forgive, how does this example from Jesus help you move along in the forgiveness process?

**Read this out loud**

An excerpt from the message this week:

“We all need forgiveness. There is no one listening today that doesn’t need forgiveness from God – and from each other. Marriages do not have a chance without a tremendous amount of forgiveness – friendships require forgiveness – people in the church need forgiveness – we all our hurt and we will all get hurt – We also need to be willing to ask for forgiveness – from God and from each other. Forgiveness does not downplay the hurt – it does hurt – but we are not hurting the person who needs forgiving by withholding grace – we end up hurting ourselves – because bitterness grows – it will stay there – and it will affect our relationship with God and with others.

**Read 1 Corinthians 13:5, Matthew 6:14-15, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13 and then answer the following questions:**

1. Share a time when you asked for forgiveness or someone asked you for forgiveness. What motivated you to ask for forgiveness or give forgiveness?
2. Based on these verses, why do we forgive? Think of the people you need to forgive or you need to ask forgiveness. In light of these verses, what is your motivation for forgiveness? How do these verses help you move toward forgiveness?
3. Now think about forgiveness from God. What is your understanding of forgiveness based on the death and resurrection of Jesus? How does this motivate you to ask God for forgiveness?

**Additional Study**

If you have time during your Small Group or you want to study more about the message topic, read and consider the following passages:

* 1 Corinthians 13:5
* Matthew 18:21-35
* James 2:8

**NEXT STEPS**

1. How are you going to apply the lessons learned in the message this week?

2. What do you need someone in the group to do to help you take the next step?

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**PRAYER**

1. Pray for the person you are going to be supporting as they take their next step.
2. What would you offer to God in prayer concerning the lesson?

**SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY**

Establish a regular rhythm of serving together! Below are some service opportunities.

* BENSON - Local Mission Partner is ABIDE. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
* MILLARD - Local Mission Partner is Heartland Hope. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
* FREMONT - Local Mission Partner is LifeHouse. Contact Campus Pastor for more information.
* OMAHA - Local Mission Partner is Open Door Mission. Contact Lyndsey Deyoe for more information.
* Or get to know your community! Seek out service opportunities in your area.