

**A Nicodemus Sunday:**

Is there ever a limit to when God will stop forgiving us?

Why does God forgive us?

Happy Father's Day - Fourth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion

June 20, 2021

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**PREWORSHIP MUSIC**

*Great is Thy Faithfulness*<sup>1</sup>

*Rock of Ages*<sup>2</sup>

*God is so Good*<sup>3</sup>

**GREETING**

**PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

*All: God, our Guide and our Protector, as we gather today for worship, open our minds and souls and hearts, that we may be inclined to hear the gentle direction of your spirit in our lives. Help us follow you that we might be all you have created us to be. Amen.*

**HYMN**

*Softly and Tenderly*<sup>4</sup>

**Bulletin, Last Page**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION<sup>5</sup>**

*All people:* God, forgive my incompleteness:  
not growing in Christ,  
not expanding my knowledge of the Scriptures,  
not developing all my talents.

God, forgive my disinterest:  
a lack of concern for needs around me,  
apathy regarding the lostness of millions,

God, forgive my dishonesty:  
taking the easy way rather than the right way,  
speaking in one manner while living in another,  
silencing truth to preserve tranquility,  
settling for less than what is best,  
loving tradition more than obeying your pioneering Spirit.

God, forgive my loudness:  
talking when I should be listening,  
proclaiming when I should be studying,  
busying myself with new tasks  
when I should be finding a quiet place to rest.

God, forgive my silence:  
feeling love and failing to whisper it,  
reeling with joy and not shouting hallelujah,  
knowing truth and forfeiting an opportunity to share it,  
sensing a need to share my faith and squelching the impulse.  
God, please forgive me.

<sup>1</sup> Public Domain. Thomas O. Chisholm 1923.

<sup>2</sup> Public Domain. A. M. Toplady (1740-1778)

<sup>3</sup> Public Domain. Velna A. Ledin 1933,

<sup>4</sup> Public Domain. Will Thompson. 1880.

<sup>5</sup> Written by C. Welton Gaddy, from [http://1stholistic.com/Spl\\_prayers/prayer\\_forgive\\_gaddy.htm](http://1stholistic.com/Spl_prayers/prayer_forgive_gaddy.htm). © 1998-2004, ICBS Inc.

**ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS** (Based on Psalm 103:12)

Pastor: Find comfort in these words from the book of Psalms: “As far as the east is from the west, so far has God removed our transgressions from us”.

*All people: Thanks be to God for mercy!  
We’ve been forgiven and can begin anew! Amen.*

**A SPECIAL TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN**

**GOSPEL READING**

**Matthew 18:21-35**

**SERMON**

*To Err is Human – To Forgive is Divine!*

**Rev. Laura C. Bair**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD’S PRAYER**

*All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

**SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Pastor: And so, we gather now,  
at the table of our Savior.  
We come from many places,  
differing in age, differing in race,  
differing in orientation, politics and even religion.  
As we come together around the table  
we discover that our differences are not something we tolerate  
but that our differences are indeed a blessing,  
the more differences we bring, the more fully we experience  
the presence of the Sacred in our midst.  
So come, children of God, just as you are.

Wherever you are on this journey of life, you are welcome here,  
here in this place, here in this community, here at this table.  
Come, children of God,  
come, and let us remember  
the Story of God’s Great Faithfulness in Christ.

We remember the stories of Jesus -  
stories of bread broken and shared, of feeding a multitude,  
stories of being gathered together, enemy and friend, around tables,  
stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of the sacred.

It was on a night of both celebration and betrayal  
that Jesus took the leftover bread on the table,  
blessed it and broke it;  
reminding his friends  
that it is in the breaking that we become whole,  
in losing our lives that we find them,  
in serving that we are served.

As the grain scattered, becomes one in the loaf,  
when we eat this bread, we become one with one another.

Jesus then, also the leftover cup on the table,  
poured out and shared it,

remembering with them, the life-giving breath  
even now pounding a rhythm through our veins,  
the breath of life from whence we come,  
the breath that precedes and follows all that we can see and cannot see.

As the grapes find life in the vine,  
when we drink this cup,  
we become at one with the source of life itself.  
And so, we pray together:

**All:** *Come, Holy Spirit, come. Bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, that we might recognize the Risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another. Come, Holy Spirit, come. Amen.*

### SHARING THE ELEMENTS

#### THANKSGIVING & OFFERTORY

**All:** *Lord of grace and forgiveness, who gave everything and spared nothing to make us your own, as represented in this Holy Meal, we offer back to you what you have so freely given to us. Let our very being, all that we say and do, all that we think and plan and consider, as well as the giving of our financial tithes and offerings, be pleasing to you, Creator, Provider, and Savior, in whose name we pray. Amen*

#### BENEDICTION<sup>6</sup>

**Pastor:** The Banquet of God's love has been given to you.  
You have received blessing upon blessing.  
Go into the world and give peace and hope  
in Christ's Name to all you meet.  
God's peace and God's love be with you now and always.

**All:** *Amen!*

#### POSTLUDE

*To God Be the Glory*<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Townley, Nancy C. Benediction: Worship Connection: October 4, 2020. *Ministry Matters*.  
<https://www.ministrymatters.com/worship/entry/1717/worship-connection-october-4-2020> (Adapted)

<sup>7</sup> Public Domain. Crosby, Fanny. 1875.

## Softly and Tenderly

G G/B D7/A G C C/G G

1 Soft - ly and ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing for  
 2 Why should we tar - ry when Je - sus is plead - ing, plead - ing for  
 3 O for the won - der - ful love he has prom - ised, prom - ised for

A7/E D G G/B D7/A G C C/G G

you and for me; see, on the por - tals he's wait - ing and watch - ing,  
 you and for me? Why should we lin - ger and heed not his mer - cies,  
 you and for me! Though we have sinned, he has mer - cy and par - don,

Refrain  
N.C. D7 G D G

watch - ing for you and for me. Come home, come home,  
 mer - cies for you and for me? Come home, come home,  
 par - don for you and for me.

D/A D/F# E7 A7 D A7/E D7/F# G G/B D7/A G

ye who are wea - ry, come home; ear - nest - ly, ten - der - ly,

C C/G G G/B C G/D D7 G

Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing, O sin - ner, come home!