

Forgive Us: Something is Wrong

Genesis 3:1-12; Psalm 139:23-24 (May 2, 2021)



Begin with Prayer

In silence, invite the Holy Spirit to guide. Pray: *Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.* (Psalm 139:23-24).

Reconnecting and Debriefing

Take a moment to check in with one another (2 minutes each).

1. *In which ways have you sensed God leading you this past week?*
2. *In one word, how would you respond to a friend who asked, "What's wrong with you today?"?*

Introduction

Whether we gather in person or online, our goal remains the same: to be a people apprenticed to the life of Jesus. His life and teaching is our example and our source of truth. Remember the commitments we make to each other to foster safety and freedom as we pursue spiritual growth together:

- Whenever possible, please listen to the sermon prior to gathering (Sunday or online).
- While we are meeting (even online), commit to focussing rather than multitasking. Be all here.
- Give everyone an opportunity to share, even if it takes time to form or finish their thoughts.
- Be respectful and non-judgmental.
- Honour sharing boundaries (only what you have permission to share, no gossip) and guard confidentiality (what we share here stays here).
- Don't try to fix, problem-solve or rescue; point one another to the truths of the gospel.

Listening to God's Word

Psalm 32 describes the heart of a man crushed by the weight of sin. This most likely refers to King David's sexual exploitation of Bathsheba and arranged murder of her husband. Keeping silence and hiding the sin seemed to be a way out of the problem. But David was wrong: "When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long; ... my strength was sapped" (32:3-4). Sin is like a lethal virus that destroys our souls (and even bodies) and brings a burden that is impossible to bear. Is there a solution for that? Is there any way out of this deadlock? This week's study will help us to discern what to do with our wrongdoings as Jesus' apprentices.

Small Group Discussion

Read Genesis 3:1-8. Then discuss together:

- *What is your first thought when you read through this/these passage(s)?*
- *What does Gen. 3:1 reveal about the serpent's nature in its core?*

Note: *In Revelation 20, Satan is identified as being the ancient serpent (v.2) whose deception in this world will finally come to an end.*

- *How do the serpent's and the woman's description of God's will compare with Gen. 2:16-17?*
- *Given creation's goodness (1:31), why was the suggestion in 3:4-5 so tempting?*
- *What are some temptations that the serpent would whisper to you?*
- *What does the couple's reaction in 3:7-8 reveal about how we normally deal with sin?*
- *What does God actually want for us to do when we sin?*
- *What is your typical first inclination when you wrong someone?*
- *Describe the gap between sin's promises (3:4-5) and its outcomes in (3:7-8).*
- *Why is it so difficult to choose God's way instead of our own way?*

- **Read Romans 6:20-23.** *How does this Scripture help us understand the main Scripture we are studying today?*
- *What longing or desire do these Scripture awaken in you?*
- *How is the Holy Spirit calling you to respond to what we have discussed?*

Introducing the Series Practice: A Prayer of Confession

In the Book of Common Prayer, worshippers are instructed to pray this prayer:

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, in what we have done, and in what we have left undone; we have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive our sins, that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.

- **Entry Level Practice:** If you're not used to "getting real" with God, one day this week, take 5 minutes before bed to silently **review** your day from start to finish. **Reflect** on your actions and attitudes. Then, try praying a simplified version of the **confession** above: *Merciful God, I am sorry for the ways I have sinned today. Forgive me, and teach me to do what is right. Amen.* Be **assured** of God's pardon (1 John 1:9). **Make note of how this affects you.**
- **Foundational Practice:** As you spend time in prayer, work on memorizing the Confession above, so that you can have it readily available to your spirit wherever you pray, and whenever you become aware of straying from God. As in the Entry Level practice, begin to set aside time every day to **review, reflect, confess** (with this prayer), and be **assured** of pardon. **Make note of how this affects you.**
- **Stretch Practice:** In your daily time of Scripture study/meditation, pay attention to the ways your "self-will" is challenged by what you read. As you respond in prayer, **pray** the first half of the prayer (**the confession**). Then pause and speak with God **specifically** about any sins you're aware of, as well as what the Spirit has brought to light in your study. Then follow-up these specific confessions with the second half of the prayer (**request for pardon**). As in the above practices, be **assured** of pardon. **Make note of how this affects you.**

Caring for One Another

- *Do you or your family have a need that the Life Group can help meet?*

Using **Psalm 32** as a guide, based on what you've shared together, spend time listening to God and praying for one another.