



Healing and Wholeness (2) Forgiveness and Reconciliation 2 Corinthians 5.16-21

Opening up! Connecting with each other.

We concluded our last session with prayer for healing. If you feel able and it is appropriate you might want to share with one another any answers to those prayers or revelation experienced in the past week.

Discuss in the group something that was either lost or broken and if it was found or mended! Understand that we can be lost and broken and in need of mending ourselves and that we need to turn to Jesus!

Series prayer

Come in weakness, find strength; come in sickness, find health;
Come in chains, find freedom; come in confusion, find peace;
Come in sorrow, find joy; come in doubt, find faith;
Come in despair, find courage; come alone, find Christ.

Listening in!

- Read 2 Corinthians 5.16-21

This is a promise of a new beginning. Healing is to be received and shared.

SIN

- is a blunder, missing the mark, treating others as disposable
- involves thought, word and action
- is serious. God is holy and Jesus died because of sin
- the responsibility is ours - the consequences are always harmful and spoil relationships

Why do you think we keep sinning?

In what ways can we help ourselves not to sin?

FORGIVENESS

- is to be received (Psalm 32.1-5)
- invites repentance (Mark 1.15)
- is needed daily (1 John 1.5-10) (*heightened awareness of sin often indicates growing faith, not the opposite*)
- enables healing (Mark 2.1-12; James 5.16)
- is to be shared (Matthew 6.14,15; Matthew 18.21-35)
- is a decision (Colossians 3.13)
- means facing the truth (Luke 6.37-42; Romans 3.23)
- means forgetting (Psalm 103.2; Isaiah 38.17; Micah 7.19)
- brings release
- enables restitution (Luke 19.1-10)
- leads to acceptance – of God's love, others, myself
- is a process (no one should be forced to forgive till they are ready)

The key is being open and honest to God about where we are. The process over time might go like this:

God, I don't want to forgive, I'm so hurt

God, I don't want to forgive, change my heart

God, I *want* to want to forgive it's only you who can change me ...

Healing comes through

- understanding the truth which leads to
- allocation of responsibility then
- confession and forgiveness.

A good apology is 'I'm sorry that

A poor apology is 'I'm sorry if or but'

I AM NEITHER

Good nor Bad, Generous nor Selfish

Honest nor Dishonest, Saint nor Sinner

I AM BOTH

God loves me, forgives me and accepts me.

And so I can know God and

Love, forgive and accept myself and others

(Author unknown)

Discuss

Share points that really stand out for you from what you have read and discussed and if you can, say why. You might want to share Bible passages about forgiveness that mean a lot to you, or share stories of forgiveness.

Looking out!

How does this teaching apply to your own life? (Only share what you are comfortable sharing)

Looking up!

Turn what you've shared into prayer as the Spirit leads. (Always remember to keep anything shared confidential)