

Re:Easter Blog – 15th March

Reconciliation

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Please read the small print very carefully.

We delight in the fact that, through Jesus Christ, we who believe are forgiven of all we have done which has been in opposition to God; and are healed from all the damage that sin and other people's actions have inflicted upon us! Thank God for his amazing grace.

And we know that, not only are we forgiven and reconciled to God but that he appoints us to be his reconcilers on earth to draw many others into his forgiveness too! *“God ... reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.”* 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

Perhaps during this time leading up to Easter we could all pray for and find an opportunity to encourage someone who doesn't yet follow Jesus to 'be reconciled to God'.

But what about the conditional statement in the Lord's prayer? What about how we get on, or don't, with other people? Can we delight in our forgiveness, and work to encourage others to reconcile with God, and at the same time be unforgiving or bitter towards someone else? Bitterness and the grace of God do not co-exist well (Hebrews 12:15). And how much more damage do we do to ourselves, and to the body of Christ, if we haven't forgiven someone who is or who was in our own church fellowship?

As Sandra challenged a number of people recently at Inspire and Wednesday Fellowship 'if our hands are full holding on to grudges, how can we reach out to receive God's bountiful and unconditional love?'

Prayer

Take a few minutes quietly to think over what 'reconciliation' means to you.

Then pray for those places in the world where there is conflict leading to suffering and death. (Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan, Northern Nigeria to suggest some). Pray for peace and pray that these factions and people may be reconciled to God.

Next, pray for the people with whom God wants you to share his message of reconciliation.

And then finally pray for yourself that the Holy Spirit will show you anyone that you haven't forgiven and will give you the strength to do what he shows you.

Action

And it is a hard one.... but very obvious too. If you know that God knows that you are bitter or are holding a grudge against someone else, or perhaps they are holding a grudge against you, pray for that person now and take action to be reconciled to that person before Easter this year. *“All things are possible with God”*.