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Discipleship



FOLLOW UP & DISCIPLESHIP

INTRODUCTION

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations ... Matt. 28:19

God wants disciples, not just converts.

Discussion: Were you followed up or discipled as a young Christian? How has this affected you?

Why Disciples?

A disciple is not just a follower, but a committed, willing and yielded follower of the Lord.

He's a dedicated, fruitful, mature Christian who leads others to Christ and help them to grow in the Lord.

"A disciple is a functionally mature, responsible reproducing member of a local church."
D. Kennedy

Jesus' view of discipleship

A disciple is one who:

Deny self (Lk. 9:23; Mk. 8:34; Mt. 16:24)

In step with Christ (Mt. 10:24, 25,32)

Serve others (Mt. 10:42; Mk. 10:42-54)

Committed to God's word (John 8:31,32)

Involved in the great commission (Mt. 28:18-20)

Produces much fruit (John 15:8)

Loves other believers (John 13:24-35)

Encourages the body (John 21:15b; Eph. 4:11-12)

What is discipleship?

Discipleship is a process of imparting the life of the Lord Jesus unto the child. It is a gradual, continuous, and cumulative learning process that is geared towards making a disciple conform to the image of Christ Jesus.

The discipler need to be like:

A mother - gentle, understanding and loving (1 Thess. 2:7-8)

A Father - encouraging, comforting, and urging to live a life dedicated to God. (1 Thess. 2:11-12)

A role model - pure in conduct, right and without fault. (1 Thess. 2:10)

Only few of the converts of many large crusades remain planted in the faith and become mature faithful Christians.

"Everyone was in the business of evangelism but nobody seemed particularly interested in follow up"

Dawson Trotman, the founder of the Navigator

What percentage of the children we led to Christ in our Bible clubs & Sunday schools remain as Christians in their teenage or adulthood? John 15:16

Every new convert / young Christian need to be properly followed up and disciplined.

Who to follow up / disciple

You cannot disciple a sinner!

A new convert / young Christian in young B/club or S/school

Converts during our evangelistic programs

Children generally in their critical period of spiritual growth

Things to note when following up a child

Take cognizance of his home situation

Take cognizance of his interest

Have a program of follow up drawn

Don't forget he is a child

Biblical Principles

Jesus gave touched many in His ministry and gave His life for all on the cross, but He devoted His ministry to train the 12 disciples. 2 Tim. 2:2

The principle of selection – Lk. 6:12-13

The principle of Association – Mk. 3:14

The principle of Instruction – Matt. 10:16-18

Discipleship in the Early Church (Acts 14:21-23)

Personal contact – 1 Thess. 2:7-11 (Association & Instruction)

Constant & fervent prayers – Gal. 4:19; 2 Thess. 2:13

Writing Letters

They helped the new converts to establish a church fellowship

They were role models to the converts.

How to begin

Prayerfully select some

Meet regularly

Draw a program of follow up

Have a goal

Suggestion of things to do

Share

Review

Study

Question

Pray

Others: visitation, evangelism, etc.

Qualities of a discipler

He must be a disciple himself

He must be a growing Christian

A man of integrity

A shepherd heart

Should not over commit his time

Patience and perseverance

Prayerful

Methods of Follow-up

a. Support the child in prayer. 1 Thess. 1:2 Gal. 4:19

b. Letters could be written to the child. 2 Thess. 3:17

c. Visit the child at home. 1 Thess. 2: 17; 3:10

- visit, encourage the child

- gives the teacher an opportunity to meet the child's parents

- helps you to know the child's home situation.

Problems connected with following up a child

Problem of resistance

Parental interruption

Problem of indiscipline

Lack of assurance

The child's reluctance



DEALING SIN *With*

The moment a child comes to know Christ he becomes righteous because the righteousness of Jesus has been automatically imputed to him (Rom. 4:5; 5:17; 9:30; 10:4,10). He is no more under the dominion of sin, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made him free from the law of sin and death. Rom.8:2; Rom.6:14.

WHAT IS SIN?

Sin is anything that displeases God. God does not expect his children to sin because a saved child is no more under the dominion of sin. Rom.6:14, but if he yields to temptation to sin, all hope is not lost. God in his faithfulness has made provision for his forgiveness if he repents and confesses his sin.

"If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" - 1 John 1:9.

TYPES OF CONFESSION

- A. Confession before salvation: this is the confession that leads to salvation. It deals with general sins. It is a time when the child allows the Spirit of God to convict him of his sins which he confesses and believes unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Rom. 10:9.
- b. Confession after salvation: This deals with specific sins committed after one has been saved and it has to be confessed immediately, and specifically.

Disadvantages of unconfessed sins.

- a. Unconfessed sins hinder us from receiving answers to our prayers - Psalm 66:18.
When a child sins his prayers are blocked by sin. After confession the child's prayers go to God unhindered.
- b. Lead to failure. Prov. 28:13
- c. Affects our relationship with God.
- d. Can lead to eternal death.

STEPS IN DEALING WITH SIN

- a. Let the child know he has sinned
- b. Tell him/her the danger of being in a sinful state and that if Christ should come the child will not go with Him.
- c. Tell him the promise of God to forgive him (1 John 1:9).
- d. Let him name the specific sin(s) and ask God to forgive him.
- e. He should confess to whoever he has offended, where necessary.
- f. Encourage him to live a righteous life.
- g. Assure him that God forgives and forgets - Heb.10:17; Isaiah 43:25.
- h. Pray with him.



HOW TO STUDY

THE BIBLE

1. WHY?

1. The Bible is a revelation of the truth and the child has the right to discover the truth for himself. Our duty is to help him launch into this wonderful and blessed adventure.
2. A child who is hungry must be fed. Such was one of the ten points of the "Declaration of the Children's Rights" emphasized during the International Year of the Child (1979). If this point underlines the responsibility of mankind towards the starving children of the world, it also reminds Christians of their duty towards the children who perish spiritually in the famine of God's Word (Amos 8:11).
3. Because a child's faith must have a well-built foundation, he must learn for himself what God says, in order to become a tree which being rooted beside a stream, is able to withstand all the winds of false doctrines and the tempests of life. (Psalm 1).
4. Profitable Bible reading has to be taught. After being spoon-fed, the child must learn to eat properly himself. Spiritually he also has to be taught how to feed himself with the word of God.

2. WHEN?

1. In the spiritual journey of the child.
(a) Before a personal relationship has been established between him and the Lord. Bible reading is not an end in itself. The written word has been given to lead us into contact with the living Lord. The scriptures "bear witness of Jesus" (John 5:39).

(b) After a personal encounter with the Saviour. Teaching a converted child how to read the Bible daily and thoughtfully is one of the best ways to help him grow spiritually.

2. In our Ministry.

(a) During an evangelistic children's camp, a holiday club etc; such activities provide ideal opportunities to practice daily Bible reading.

(b) After an evangelistic mission, organise follow-up meetings aimed at teaching Bible reading or start children clubs in Christian homes where Bible reading can be regularly practised.

(c) In church-based retreats for children (Friday evening to Sunday afternoon), there is the possibility to teach the children how to read the Bible (besides other activities) and to organise a parent - children training class for family Bible reading.

3. HOW?

1. Reading the Bible with the child.
(a) This is best done in the frame of the family. In the Old Covenant, parents told their children about God's miracles for His people. They had to live a God-fearing life themselves.

There is no recipe for family worship. Each family will have to find its own style and choose the best suitable time for all the



members. To have a time of joy in the presence of the Lord, worship must be adapted to the age of the children. The youngest must be able to understand.

(b) The 8th chapter of Nehemiah recounts the public reading of the Law after the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, to which adults and children old enough to understand were present. Some key verbs in this story give us a guide line:-

- Opening God's Book 8:5
- Praying 8:6
- Reading 8:3, 8, 18
- Explaining so that everyone understands 8:7-8
- Taking the message to the heart. 8:9-12, 14-18
- Celebrating with joy and sharing. 8:10-12.

2. Teach the child to read the Bible himself:-

The most favourable time to acquire the habit of redeeming the time to read God's word and letting it shape thoughts and conducts is before adolescence.

a. Some practical hints (not infallible secrets).

Invite the children to:

- (i) Choose a place as quiet as possible.
- (ii) Choose a specific time during the day and consider it a sacred time with God.
- (iii) Follow a Bible reading plan to guide him.
- (iv) Have a note book in which to jot down the golden verse for the day, or a thought, a prayer, a question suggested by the text.

b. A simple method of Bible reading.

- (i) Prayer. Ask God to open your eyes that you may see wonderful things from His Word (Psalm 119:18). With your own intelligence you cannot understand the things of God and you need the help of the Holy Spirit.
- (ii) Read it through. Avoid a superficial and sterile reading.
- (iii) Think it over. Ask yourself simple questions, such as,
 - who are the people mentioned in this passage?
 - What have I learnt about God?
 - Is there a good example to follow?
 - A bad one not to follow?
 - Is there a promise to believe, a command to obey?
 - What is your golden verse for the day?

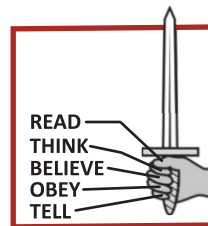
(iv) Write it down.

(v) Pray about it. Transform into prayer what God has been telling you.

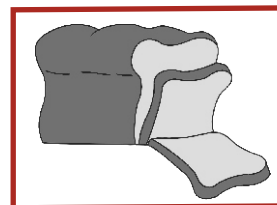
(vi) Live it out. Believe what God has said and put it into practice.

(vii) Pass it on.

Two illustrations:



a. The sword. The Bible is the sword of the Spirit. Draw one sword and draw a hand to hold it. Write on the fingers verbs as shown in this illustration:



B. Bread. The Bible is the bread of life. Use bread as an Object Lesson to teach the how to study the Bible thus:

Pray before eating:

▶ **Pray before reading the Bible.**

Cut a piece of bread:

▶ **Choose the passage to read**

Have a bite

▶ **Read it**

Chew

▶ **Think it over**

Swallow

▶ **Believe it**

Digest and use your new energy

▶ **Make use of what God has said**

Tell about the good bread

▶ **Encourage other to read the Bible**



Payer is an important aspect of Christian living. Prayer is talking to and with God. Prayer can be said by anybody but God would only hear the prayers of those who are his children and free from sin.

GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER:

Who can pray? Anyone can pray but only someone who has Jesus in his heart can be sure of God's answer.

When should we pray? At all times, especially when we wake up in the morning, thanking God for protection through the night. Whenever we want to eat, for blessings on our food. When we want to sleep and also at any other time. 1 Thess.5:17; Psalm 55:17.

Where should we pray? We can pray in Church, in Bible Clubs, at Home, in School, as we walk along anywhere and everywhere.

How should we pray? We can kneel down to humble ourselves before God, we can stand up and bow our heads to show we respect God, we can sit down to pray, we can pray when we lie down, the position we take depends on what we are doing and where we are. A child of God should always pray in Jesus name because God promises to answer only prayers said in Jesus name. John 14:6; 16:23; 15:16; 14:14.

Under what condition will God

2.8

TEACHING CHILDREN HOW TO PRAY

not hear our prayers? When we sin our prayers will be hindered. For our prayers to be answered by God every sin must be confessed.

SIMPLE WAYS TO HELP A CHILD PRAY

a) The Lord's Prayer:

Jesus Christ gave us a pattern of prayer. Matt.6:9-13. The **Lord's prayer is in this pattern:**

1. Address to the Heavenly Father
2. Worship
3. Intercession
4. Confession
5. Petition
6. Adoration and Thanksgiving
7. In Jesus Name
8. Amen.

b) A.C.T.S.:

- A- Adoration i.e., praising and worshiping God - Psalm 113:1-2; 100.
- C- Confession of our sins to God - 1 John 1:9.
- T- Thanksgiving - Psalm 118:1.
- S- Supplication - Psalm 55:1; 54:2.

c) Praying hands:

The other method is using the two hands. Each hand or finger compliments the other.

Right palm: Praise and adoration: Praise is telling God who He is. For example, 'Oh God how wonderful You are, You are excellent, You made the whole world'. - Psalm 104.

Left palm: Thanksgiving: Giving thanks for specific things. For example, 'thank God for health, your body,



the air we breathe, the food we eat, friends to play with, a place to sleep and live' etc. Psalm 103.

Right Fist: Confession of sins - or if you did not sin that day, thanking God for His grace that kept you from sin.

It should not be assumed that all the children would have sinned that day. It is possible for a child not to sin at all in one day, in which case the child should thank God for keeping him from sin.

Left Fist: Pray for those who offended you or sinned against you. Pray that God forgive them and help them to change. Matt.5:44-45.

Right Thumb: Pray for your family, those nearest and dearest to you. Pray for their salvation if anyone of them is not yet saved. - Acts 16:31. Pray that God will supply all their needs. Phil.4:19

Left Thumb: Pray for little children all over the world. They are nearest to the heart of Jesus - Matt.18:10,14; Mk.10:14.

Right Index (pointing) Finger: Pray for those who point us to God. The Pastor, Bible Club and Sunday School Teachers, Missionaries, Evangelists and all who work for God.

Left Index (pointing) Finger: For all Churches, Bible Schools, Gospel Ministries and all Christians, that Christians be united together and do wonderful things for God. John.17:21; 14:12.

Right Middle (longest) Finger: For those who are in authority e.g. Presidents, Governors, Ministers, the Military & Police, other leaders e.g. Pastors, Heads of Schools, School Teachers etc.

Left Middle (longest) Finger: For our nation and all the nations of the world, that the glory of God cover the earth as the waters cover the sea - Psalm 24:1; Isaiah 45:22; Numbers 14:21.

Right Ring Finger: For the weak - The sick, the orphans,

the aged & poor people, the crippled, blind, lame and mad people and all who have one infirmity or the other. That God help them to overcome their difficulties - Matt.4:23. Mention specific people who are sick that you know.

Left Ring Finger: For all people of other religions who do not yet know Jesus as Lord and Saviour; mention them by their names. Pray for their salvation. Lk.1:79; Rom.2:19; Acts 26:18.

Right Little Finger: Pray for yourself, that God use you on earth for his Glory, and that you live for Christ everyday of your life.

Left Little Finger: Pray for whatever you need right now and believe God to provide for you. 1 John 5:14; Phil.4:19.

HOW DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYER?

It is important to teach children that God always hears prayers and His answers could be:

YES: Hannah received YES to her prayers - 1 Samuel 1:9-27.

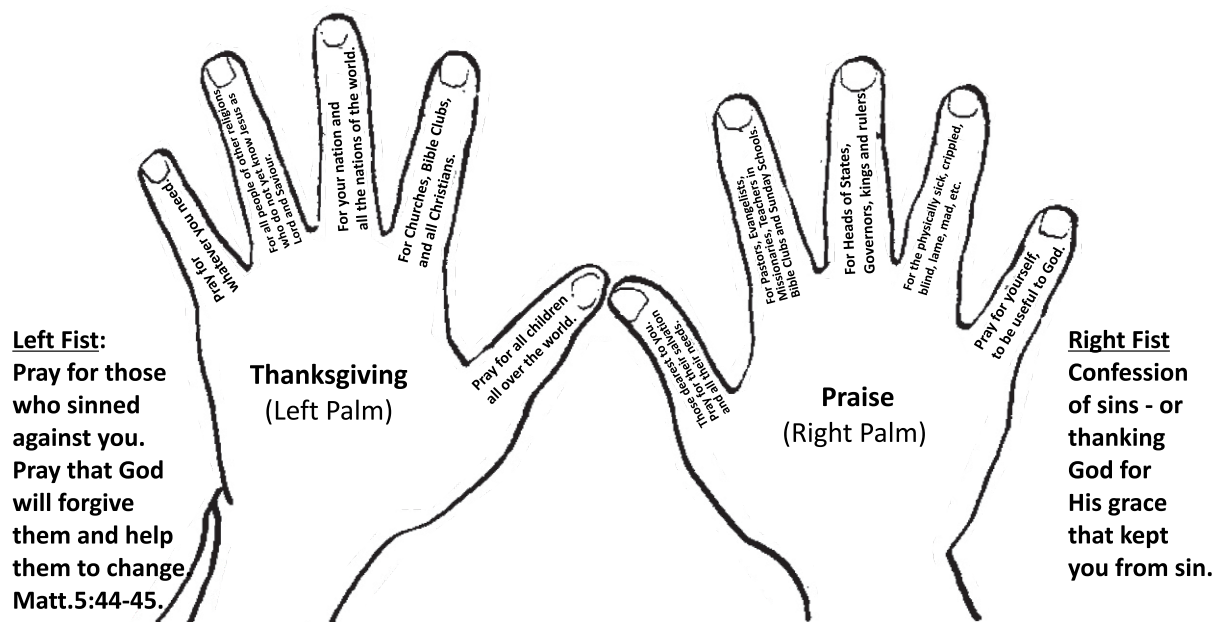
WAIT: Mary and Martha received WAIT to their request that Jesus should come and heal. Lazarus - John 11:1-46.

NO: Apostle Paul received NO when he told God to remove the thorn in his flesh. 2 Corinth.12:9-10.

Whatever be the answer, it is for our good, because every answer He gives works for His glory, as well as His will for our lives. Whatever answer we receive we should always cultivate the habit of thanking God for it. (1 Thess.5:18,24).

Hindrances to Prayer:

- i. Sin - Psalm 66:18;
- ii. Unbelief - James 1:6-8.





WITNESSING

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A WITNESS?

It means to be present at the scene of a particular event, and so be able to describe it. Now we were not there when Jesus was born, when He died and resurrected. How then can we be said to be His witnesses?

Yes, we can be said to be His witnesses because we have experienced His touch in our lives. We have experienced the power of His death and resurrection. It is at work within us. We can testify to it anywhere, anytime. So we are His witnesses, not only can we be. It is to this, that we are witnesses.

WHO'S IDEA IS IT THAT WE SHOULD WITNESS?

It is God's idea. Mark 16:15; Matt.28:18-20; Acts 1:8. No one who ever goes through this experience is ever able to shut up. Except if nothing happened to you, then you cannot even be a witness. But if something happened, you can't shut up about it. It is even a mandate (from the verses above) to do it.

TO WHOM SHALL WE WITNESS?

Everyone in the whole world. The young and old alike, to children and babies, to men and women, to everyone who will listen.

ARE THERE PEOPLE IN THE SCRIPTURES WHO WITNESSED?

Yes, Peter was a witness in Acts 2:14-42.

Paul and the other apostles were.

The Samaritan woman in John 4:1-41 was, just to mention a few.

WHAT SHALL WE WITNESS ABOUT?

God's love, which caused Him to send all He ever had, His wealth and everything (His Son) to us. How the Son, knowing the kind of death He was to go through, accepted to come. He had a choice to make. He chose to come. He



came, died and rose again after 3 days, and ascended into Heaven, and is seated at the right-hand of God the Father Almighty, interceding and preparing a place for us who believe (including boys and girls).

THERE ARE ALSO STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN WITNESSING

They are:

- Pray and believe God to give you souls, and for the Holy Spirit to lead you to them (ripe fruits).
- When He leads you to a soul, be courageous and share. Do your best and leave the rest (i.e. Results) to God.
- After a careful preparation ensure to take with you, all that you will require to use.
- The simple Gospel message is in - John 3:16.

For God so loved every one in the world; boys and girls, young and old, men and



women, that He gave all He ever had (His Son), to die on the cross and rose again on the 3rd day to take away the penalty of our sins, and ascended into Heaven, that whosoever believes and receives Him, allowing His precious blood to cleanse Him, should not die and perish in His iniquity, but live and have everlasting life.

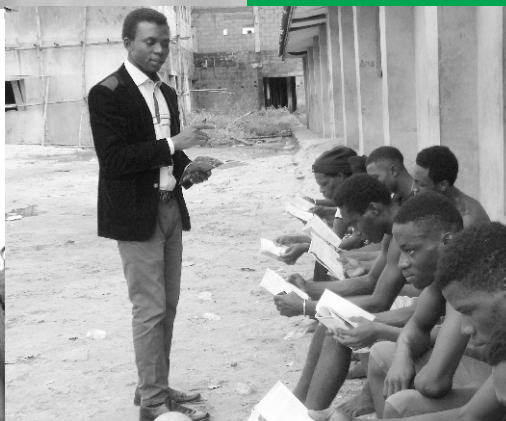
Now, you can pray with the person who is willing and lead him unto salvation in Christ Jesus, through a simple prayer of faith. (See Giving Invitation Basic 1.9)

NOTE: We must all be involved in doing this for it is a mandate from God.

Some helpful verses that can be used in witnessing, include:- John 3:16; John 1:12; 1 John 1:9; Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9-11; Rev. 3:20; Isaiah 1:18-20.



WITNESSING





Understanding FORGIVENESS or Not Forgive

After a child received Jesus Christ as his Lord and savior, he needs to understand the concept of forgiveness. This will help the child to be able to receive God's forgiveness and be willing to forgive those who harmed him

What is Forgiveness?

We look at this both from God's point of view (our forgiveness from Him), and human point of view (our forgiveness for one another).

1. God's point of view

As a theological term, forgiveness refers to God's pardon of the sins of human beings.

No religious book except the Bible teaches that God completely forgives sin (Ps 51:1,9; Isa 38:17; Heb 10:17). The initiative comes from Him (John 3:16; Col 2:13) because He is ready to forgive (Luke 15:11-32). He is a God of grace and pardon (Neh 9:17; Dan 9:9).

Forgiveness in the New Testament is directly linked to Christ (Acts 5:31; Col 1:14), His sacrificial death on the cross (Rom 4:24), and His resurrection (2 Cor 5:15). He was the morally perfect sacrifice (Rom 8:3), the final and ultimate fulfillment of all Old Testament sacrifices (Heb 9:11-10:18).

2. Human point of view

Forgiveness is the act of excusing or pardoning another in spite of his slights, shortcomings, and errors. The pardon of any offense committed against us. To give up resentment, the desire to punish or a claim for punishment or restitution.

What Forgiveness is:

- Being kind, and accepting people as they are.
-
- Not to bring up the hurts caused by the offence but allow healing to occur in ones heart?

What Forgiveness is not?

- Forgiving doesn't mean forgetting the offence completely.
- Saying the offense does not matter.
- Letting the person who did the wrong avoid the consequence of their act.
- Letting the offender hurt us or other innocent people again.
- Trusting a person again right after they hurt us.

What happens when there is no forgiveness:

1. A friend becomes an enemy.
2. Our thoughts are filled with the hurt that we feel.
3. More hurt takes place to both sides
4. Our anger and distrust of the other person grows more intense.
5. We don't want to communicate or want to be around them.

Why God Wants Us to Forgive:

1. God's commands and standards to keep,
2. To free us from anger and bitterness.
3. To allow us to receive God's forgiveness
4. Shows that we understand Christ's sacrifice and our salvation.
5. Allows us to be reconciled with those who have offended us
6. Can change the person who offended us



Conditions of Forgiveness: Repentance is a necessary ingredient of the fully developed forgiveness. Forgiveness restores completely the relationship which existed prior to the sin. "I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more" (Jer 31:34); "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions" (Isa 43:25); "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (Ps 103:12).

There must be both a granting and an acceptance of the forgiveness. It was this state of mind which led the father joyfully to welcome the Prodigal before he even gave utterance to his newly formed purpose (15:21).

So in certain cases in civil and family governments' forgiveness should be held in abeyance until it is duly sought. The offender in himself has no right to forgiveness until he seeks it in the true spirit of repentance. In the outward expressions of this, parents should often wait for the outward signs of penitence in their children. The same may be true sometimes in other relations as between brothers and sisters

1. Forgiving spirit: God want us to extend forgiveness without the repentance of the one who has wronged us. He encourage having a forgiving state of mind. This Jesus requires, as is implied by, "if ye forgive not everyone his brother from your hearts" (Matt 18:35). The Lord's Prayer: "as we also have forgiven our debtors" (6:12). It is this forgiving spirit which conditions God's forgiveness of our sins (Mark 11:25; Matt 6:14-15).

2. To seek to bring the wrongdoer to repentance. "If thy brother sin against thee go, show him his fault between thee and him alone" (Matt 18:15-17).

Conclusion: To revenge injuries is to repay evil for evil. We are all weak, frail, and sinful creatures. None of us passes through one day without feeling that he requires forgiveness from his God, and too often also from his fellow-creatures. Mercy is all our hope, forgiveness our constant prayer. Is there someone you must forgive? Is there someone who you have hurt or someone who has hurt you?

As we cannot be forgiven on the basis of our own merit, but are recipients of God's gracious forgiveness, so we need to forgive others on the basis of grace. God who is infinitely greater than us, can and will use His perfect grace to bless us, and as we receive grace – so we are to pass it on to others