

Sisters and Brothers, may we forgive one another as our Lord has forgiven us.

Living our Covenant - I want to thank all those that responded to the query about restarting our Community Gatherings. If you have not yet responded, please contact your Area Coordinator, or reply to this email. The Coordinators will start considering all the input on our Monday calls.

I want to personally thank the Area Coordinators for organizing video calls so that we can meeting virtually. I have participated in a couple calls and it is such a blessing to see folks and reconnect. If you are having any issue being able to join, we have knowledgeable people who will help you to understand how to join these video calls. Please contact your Area Coordinator or reply to this email and we will arrange for someone to help you install and learn how to use the video conference apps.

Please reach out if you have any needs or just need someone to talk to. We encourage every member to share whatever Spiritual Gifts you receive with one the Coordinators. Please reach out to your Area coordinator or me if you have unmet needs that your covenant sisters and brothers can help with. Please donate online at www.GodsDelight.org or mail your donations to P.O. Box 225008 Dallas, Tx 75222 as we are dependent on your generosity for our ongoing financial needs.

Reflection - The readings today clearly focus on the importance of forgiveness. I was meditating on Sirach 28:2 *"Forgive your neighbor's injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven"* and reflected on a past hurt that I really struggle with. I have purposeful resolve to forgive this past hurt but despite my strongest efforts I must admit defeat. It seems no amount of human will can make this hurt go away.

As I pondered this situation I found comfort in the responsorial psalm *"Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all my being, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. He pardons all your iniquities, heals all your ills. He redeems your life from destruction, crowns you with kindness and compassion. He will not always chide, nor does he keep his wrath forever. Not according to our*

sins does he deal with us, nor does he requite us according to our crimes. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so surpassing is his kindness toward those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he put our transgressions from us."

If this is how the Lord treats us, how can I do the same? Pondering this for a little while I was reminded that so much in the life of a Christian is not 'trying harder' but rather 'letting go'. The journey is a journey of saying "*O Jesus, I surrender myself to You, take care of everything*". This applies to the message of the readings today as well. It is not by our own strength that we will be able to forgive significant hurts, it is only by surrendering the situation, pain and everything to Jesus and letting Him do the healing and restoration.

The Gospel today amplifies why this is so important a journey. It is a journey of praying for a change of heart, a total release of past hurts, a heart that loves our sisters and brothers, even those who have hurt us deeply. The end of the journey is freedom, the ability to unburden ourselves and live in God's love. This is the freedom that the world does not know but we have the call to live it and share it.

I want to end with something that I learned while attending Growing Kids God's Way. The Community leveraged this parenting program many years ago and I remember hearing so many things about parenting that I wish I had known prior to having children (even though my oldest was only three, I still realized so many things that I could have done differently). The point that was made was that it was never too late to start again. The teacher suggested simply apologizing for past mistakes and starting fresh and new today. I offer the same advice regarding forgiveness. No matter our past, no matter the length of time we have been carrying around hurts, begin again today. Go to your prayer place and say the prayer "*O Jesus, I surrender myself to You, take care of everything*". Pray that He will heal the hurt, restore the relationship and give you the strength to truly forgive, ...from your heart.

Let us pray together: "*Jesus, I do surrender myself to you. Take care of everything in my life. I release all the pain and suffering that I cannot seem to*

let go of. My strength is not enough but I stand on this promise that if I let go, You will take care of it. I let go. You take care of it. Free me. Heal me. Pour forth Your love upon me and upon anyone that has hurt me in the past. With Your power and strength, I release this hurt, I release this pain, I claim the healing power of Your blood wash me clean and allow me the freedom and release that You intend. From today forward I walk in Your light and give forgiveness and receive forgiveness. Jesus, I love you."

God bless,

David