

CELL NOTES 11/6/08

(AS REQUESTED)

ICE BREAKER

How many credit / store cards do you have? When do they tempt you most?

THEME

Can I really pray that?
Reading Matthew 18 : 21 – 35

SERMON OUTLINE

- 1) The topic of forgiveness is one of the most important in the world.
- 2) It affects us all in two ways :-
 - We all get hurt, and so have the issue of forgiving others.
 - We all do things which hurt others, and hurt the Lord – for which we need forgiveness.
- 3) Forgiveness is not a natural reaction. Instinctively we are much more likely to want to retaliate or seek revenge.
- 4) Story of woman, estranged from sister, whose response to an attempt to bring them together was, “Perhaps, but she’s got to make the first move.”
- 5) Man in reading was forgiven a huge debt, but insisted on payment of a small one. We can be like that, in holding a grudge over small things, and being oblivious to the way we have abused somebody else etc.
- 6) Comment from mother of Jimmy Mizzen.
- 7) Grudge-bearing has damaging physical, psychological and social effects.
- 8) “Grudge-bearing is like taking poison, and waiting for the other person to die.”
- 9) Story of Kim Phuc and John Plummer
- 10) Our need of receiving forgiveness is huge – as brief reflection on our lives makes clear. If there is no way to find it, the world is very dark.
- 11) It is found in Christ (“Father, forgive them...”)
- 12) We need to choose forgiveness, choose Jesus – and realise that it is a process, and a daily choice. So we need His strength daily to find it.
- 13) Phrase in Lord’s Prayer is plural (Mat 6 : 12). We need to encourage each other, and walk the road together.

QUESTIONS OF APPLICATION

Read the passage? What strikes you most? What did God say to you through Sunday's message?

- 1) What have you found helpful in forgiving those who have wronged you?
- 2) Which do you find easier – forgiving others or being assured of forgiveness yourself?
- 3) How do you feel about the idea that there is a link between forgiveness, health and wider wholeness?
- 4) Is anybody wrestling with an issue of forgiveness – in either direction – at the moment?