



LET'S VISIT

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MUSINGS ABOUT FORGIVENESS

Imagine being in Jerusalem on that fateful Friday that Jesus died. It was a day that changed the world. There is no doubt that the excitement of that hour was contagious. You see, there was excitement because three men were going to be executed. Three men were about to pay the death penalty for their crimes.

One of them was a prophet from Nazareth. The other two were revolutionists. The excitement was heightened as they were all well known. To be sure, the crowd had a natural love for the gruesome and they were eager for the show.

Not only were all three well known, they were all three popular. The revolutionists were ardent patriots. Having fought like men, they would die like men. The assembled crowd looked upon them as heroes. The young prophet had also been popular and he still was.

However, most of those around the cross that day were hostile. Having nailed the young prophet to the cross, he could not die in peace. Even the revolutionists added their insults to those of the mob. Yet, something happened that silenced one of the revolutionists. Then, his insults were changed into prayers. He had heard the young prophet on the central cross pray. He had listened as he talked to the heavenly Father. The young prophet had prayed, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do".

This is one of the most amazing utterances on the pages of history. Jesus had been hounded, betrayed and denied. He had been tried before an unjust court. He was led out of the city and nailed to a cross. Yet, his first word from the cross was not a complaint. It was not a plea for his own innocence. It was not a cry for vengeance on his enemies. It was

a prayer for forgiveness. Reading this prayer for forgiveness implies that he has forgiven them, because only a man with a forgiving soul can pray such a prayer.

The need for forgiveness among people in our day and time is great. There are many whose lives are unstained by sensuality. They are as far from immorality as east is from west. They attend church services with regularity. They are highly esteemed by their fellowman. Yet, they carry enough malice in their hearts to damn their souls.

God is not cruel, harsh, or stern in his dealings with His children. Throughout the Bible He is represented as a God of mercy. He is much more willing to forgive and forget than we are. Blessed is the man or woman in whose heart is found "the quality of mercy". That man or woman who holds no malice. The person who has learned to forgive men their trespasses. You see, that man or woman is God-like. They are God's man or God's woman. They shall receive God's mercy.

There are so many that we should show mercy and forgiveness toward. We must forgive the Judases who have come into our lives. Those who prize us less highly than they do money. Judas must have known something of Jesus' beautiful life, tender compassion and marvelous power. Yet, Judas sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. However, we must not

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In Search of the Lord's Way



Tune in to this Television Ministry
KSHV 45 -Shreveport - 7:30 a.m. Sunday
DISH channel 239 - 6:00 a.m. Sunday
DIRECT TV channel 307 - 6:00 a.m. Sunday

Gathered Here and There



What Would You Trade Your Soul For?

For The Pantry. . .

August 3 – Canned Chicken

Offering – July 27, 2025 . . \$ 2,271.00

The Lord's plan of giving ... "as ye have prospered"

Musings About Forgiveness – continued from page 1

lose sight of the fact that Jesus was ready and willing to forgive a penitent Judas. There are those who would pretend to be our friend who would sell us for a minor consideration. We must not deal severely with them, rather let us lend them a helping hand.

We must forgive our unfaithful friends. Those that would forsake and desert us in a time of critical need. When the mob entered Gethsemane and laid hold on Jesus, the disciples forsook him and fled. When Jesus saw them after the resurrection, he dealt kindly with them. He called them "my brethren". There may come a time in your life when you fall into heartless hands in an hour of misfortune. Your friends, some of them, may desert you. Hold no malice against them, but rather seek their fellowship and include them in the circle of "your brethren".

Forgive the Simons who are too weak to know you in your hour of trial. You remember the boast that Simon Peter made? He said he would never be offended and would never deny Jesus. Yet, just a few hours later, he cursed and swore and said he did not know Jesus. Though he loved the Lord, he was moved from his loyalty by a concern for his

personal safety. The disciple denied the Master, but the Master did not deny the disciple. After Jesus was raised from the dead, He found Simon and restored him. There are times that our friends will be what we call "fair weather friends". Let us not deal severely with these friends, though that is tempting and our first inclination. Rather, let us seek a loving interview with them and restore them as Jesus did Simon.

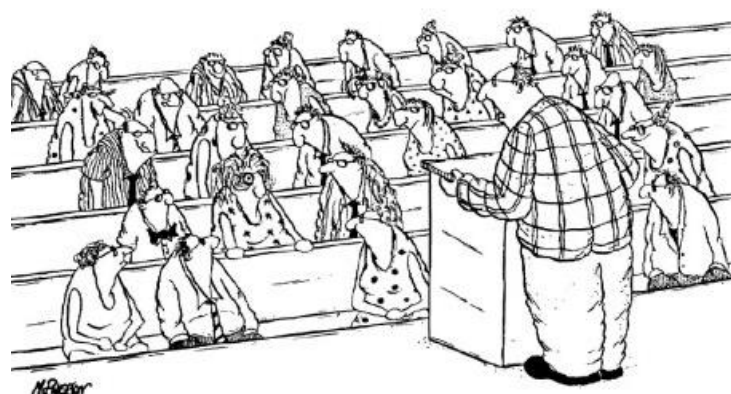
Like Jesus said, we must "forgive for they know not what they do". Those Roman soldiers did not know what they were doing. The Jewish leaders thought they were doing God a service. Jesus had said that the time would come when those who killed his disciples would think they were doing God a service. Saul of Tarsus was just such a man. Yet, he became the great Apostle Paul and the greatest force for righteousness the world has ever known.

You see, we must forgive because we have been forgiven. If we do not forgive, hatred will rob us of the joy of the Christian life, enmity will embitter us and take from our soul the sweetness that has been planted there by Jesus.

Jesus left us an example that we should follow in His steps. He said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do".

tp

On The Lighter Side. . .



Once again, I want to stress that the sermon illustration that I just used is purely fictional and is not based upon anyone in the congregation.



September 7, 2025

Put this date on your calendar, make your plans to be here and invite ALL your family and friends to come and join us for worship and lunch!

Let's make this the greatest "Friends and Family Day" in the history of the Center Church of Christ!

Hospitality group 3 will be in charge of this luncheon. The members of that group are: LaJuan Baugh, Sheri Burgay, Liela Klein, Lieza Klein, Tiffanee Klein and Trish Lout.

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Communion Preparation for August
Manny & Brittany Ortiz

Men's Business Meeting
Sunday August 10, 2025
Immediately following the morning
worship in the Church Offices.



All men of the congregation are encouraged to attend.



Wednesday
FELLOWSHIP MEAL

This past Wednesday night we had an enjoyable time of fellowship as we shared our meal together and then spent the next hour in singing and fellowship.

Plan to join us for our next Wednesday night meal on Wednesday, August 27, 2025.

OUR "CHURCH FAMILY"

Cissy Amos, LaJuan Baugh, Martha Jean Golden, Alice Hall, Thelma Hinton, LaResa Livingston, Mike Lout, Debra Pate, Jerry Pate, Wayne Sims, Betty Willis

"EXTENDED FAMILY" AND FRIENDS

Tami Abernathy (friend of Isaiah & Amanda Molloy hospitalized) Richard Barbee (Gene Bradshaw's nephew) David Bissett (Mike O'Brien's brother in law, cancer) Dwayne Brister (Cissy Amos' cousin) Jane Adams Burkhalter (Diedra Hughes' cousin) Debra Clifton (friend of LaResa Livingston) Coleen Dickerson (friend of Cissy Amos with leukemia) Leta Dozier (Ryan Perkins' grandmother) Hugh and Pat Fletcher (Sarah Fletcher's brother and sister-in-law dealing with multiple health issues) Joyce Fontenot (Debra Pate's mother) Emily Heflin (Mike Bostick's niece recovering from surgery) Suzi Hogan (Mike Bostick's sister-in-law) Ted Holt (former member of this congregation) Wynell Lawson (Diedra Hughes' aunt) Debbie Lynn (Abbey Perkins' mother dealing with memory issues) Norma Magby (Melonie Bradshaw's mother) Lamar McCormick (friend of Sarah Fletcher, multiple health issues) Lane O'Brien (Mike and Jana's son) Calvin Smith (Debra Pate's uncle); Heather Simmons Stewart (Friend of Cissy Amos) cancer; J. C. Tate & Pat Tate (Jana O'Brien's father and mother) Calvin Turner (Norma Perkins Uncle) Norman Turner (Norma Perkins' father) Tyson Turner (Norma Perkins' cousin)

THOSE IN THE MILITARY AND FOREIGN SERVICE

Cole Barbee, Adam Bradshaw, Andrew Bradshaw, Michele Bradshaw, Rosie Tate and Lucas Tate

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER!

Make a note of the dates of these activities on the Calendar for 2025.

December 7, 2025 – No Excuse Sunday
December 21, 2025 – Annual Christmas Party

PUT THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR!



Across The Preacher's Desk

When Paul writes II Timothy, he is an aged soldier of the cross. He is facing death and writes this letter to young Timothy, his son in the gospel. In chapter 1 and verse 12 he writes a beautiful passage when he says, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him." It is a touching and inspiring picture.

Paul poses himself as one possessing something of untold value which is in danger of being lost. It is something that he alone cannot protect, yet he has found in Jesus Christ a safe protector. That possession is his soul, something more valuable than any wealth. It is undying and immortal.

Paul was well acquainted with Jesus. He had seen him personally on the road to Damascus. He had known Jesus through years of prayer and providence. Yet, we may also know Jesus through the experience of the Bible carefully studied and through our own time of prayer and beholding his presence in our own lives.

May we reflect carefully upon the value of our soul and the certainty of judgment. We know that if we commit our lives to Christ and live his kind of life, the faith that sustained Paul and inspired Timothy will see us safely to victory also.

it's something to think about.....tlp

**The Lord's Plan
For Evangelism –
Each one Bring one!
55 in '25!**