



Scripture nugget – God gives us the power to forgive our enemies

But to you who hear I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you (Luke 6:27-28).

Forgiveness is from God and enables us to live fully in the present moment. God's grace is only for dealing with the present moment. Those people who cannot forgive are trapped in the past and cannot move forward. Many graces are lost. A soul can only give what it has. If he has not received forgiveness for his own sins, it is hard for him to forgive others. We can forgive others because we have received forgiveness from God for our greater debt of sin against Him. In the order of justice, the greater the love that is sinned against, the greater the debt of the sin. Our sins cause the bloody death and sacrifice of God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true cost of our sins. A soul that truly understands and values that a great debt has been cancelled out by God in his favour when God forgives him his sin, can easily forgive others. Thus, Christ demonstrates to us the immensity of God's forgiveness through the parable of the unforgiving servant whose debt of ten thousand talents (said to be around 200,000 years' wage!) was forgiven by the king, but who did not forgive the much smaller debt of a hundred denarii (said to be around 4 months' wage) of a fellow servant (cf. Matthew 18:21-35). The unforgiving servant has failed to deeply reflect on the level of forgiveness granted to him by the king, and so was hard-hearted and unforgiving of a small debt owed to him by a fellow servant. If we also do not reflect on the great sacrifice of God in the process of forgiving our sins, take God's ready forgiveness for granted and remain unchanged by God's forgiveness and love, then we, too will act like the unforgiving servant and harbor grudges, anger and unforgiveness in our hearts, putting us in bondage to Satan and the unhappy past.

***And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of Mine, you did for Me.'* (Matthew 25:40).** Forgiveness becomes easier when we do it for the sake of Christ's love and in accordance to His commands. *But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions (Matthew 6:15).* St Paul reminds us that our real enemies are not flesh and blood but the evil spirits that use human agents for their acts of wickedness (cf. Ephesians 6:12). The love of Christ enables us to see beyond the evil acts and to see underneath a wounded soul that is being taken advantage of by the evil spirits. Such a soul is starved of love, and therefore cannot show love but hatred. Thus, Christ says: love your enemies. Christ died too for these wounded souls.

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, by Your time on earth, You teach us how to love and forgive. You use the last breaths on the Cross to plead with our Heavenly Father: *Forgive them for they do not know what they are doing (cf. Luke 23:34).* Your love is what empowers us to forgive. I ask forgiveness for all my sins. Never let me take Your forgiveness for granted nor fail to meditate on Your sufferings and Passion that made the forgiveness of my sins possible. Give me the grace to abhor sin because they cause You pain and suffering and separate me from You. Help me forgive others as You forgive me. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.