



CELL GUIDE 2015

Theme	Jubilee – Year of Forgiveness
Topic	Why Forgiveness?
Speaker	Ps Chua Seng Lee
Date	7 th and 8th March 2015

Message Summary

Spiritual Objective: Forgiveness – what it really means, and what we are to do

Pastor Seng Lee began by sharing with us on Bishop Angelos' (leader of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the United Kingdom) statement in response to the brutal beheading of 21 Egyptian Copts. "It may seem unbelievable to some of your readers, but as a Christian and a Christian minister I have a responsibility to myself and to others to guide them down this path of forgiveness. We don't forgive the act because the act is heinous. But we do forgive the killers from the depths of our hearts."

In even the most brutal and personal circumstances, how do we as believers in Christ, forgive? Do we really know the true meaning of forgiveness as God has demonstrated and demonstrates for us?

3 main things we must relearn from God

1. The depth of our sinfulness

Often is it repeated that man has sinned, fallen short of the glory of God, and the wages of sin await the sinner. Jesus Christ died for our sins, and in doing so took our sinfulness and its necessary consequences upon Himself. Perhaps this knowledge has become too commonplace for us – we have forgotten the depth of our sinfulness. In order to re-focus or re-align our understanding of the depth of our sinfulness, Ps Seng Lee exhorted us to realize three things about the severity of sin.

A) Sin separates us from God

In the story of Simon the Pharisee and Jesus dining in his home (Luke 7:39), Simon was full of self righteousness in condemning the woman as a sinner, and disparaging the holy nature of Christ for allowing Himself to be touched by a sinner. In a beautiful turn of events, it was the "sinner woman", who through her faith, had her sins forgiven, and experienced that personal and intimate touch of the Lord. Simon in his self righteousness, missed all of that, and in his unwillingness to apprehend his own sinful nature, had the distance in his personal relationship with the Lord laid bare before him.

B) Sin is hostile to God

In Romans 8:6-8, it speaks of what our minds are set on, and the resulting consequences. The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is

life and peace. More strikingly, the verses state **the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God... and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** Ps Seng Lee encouraged us to read the Word carefully, and in doing so, discern that there are things of the flesh, of the world, that the Lord **hates**. Upon checking ourselves, the list in Proverbs 6:16-17 would



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surely see at least one, if not more, acts, which we commit. If we truly seize the truth laid out in Proverbs 6:16-17, we would know that we need to ask the Lord for forgiveness and repent – lest we make light of what the Lord has clearly said He hates.

C) Sin, in us, makes us tolerate Evil

1 John 1:8-10 speaks of how we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us if we say that we have no sin. Ps Seng Lee warned against dangerous mentalities and behaviours that might be working subtly (or not so subtly) in our minds – namely those of **tolerance** and **rationalization** towards sin. One of the greatest strategies of the devil is to see us rationalize and explain away our sin, and thus fail to see the need for forgiveness. On an even more severe level, our rationalization of sin is akin to proclaiming that our judgement rises above the Lord's! Let us not be catch ourselves and ask for forgiveness and repent should we find ourselves rationalizing away sin.

2. The depth of His Sacrifice

Ps Seng Lee related to us the true story of a woman who worked at a wildlife reserve, and whose task was to help rear and assimilate baby monkeys from the artificial living spaces back into nature. In this, she sought to be as close to being a mother monkey as possible, climbing, smelling, eating, and all other activities as only a monkey could. In other words, she forsook her human form to take on the form of another (here, a mother monkey) to best provide for the baby monkeys she was to care for.

The weight of what God did for us in taking on human form is like that act, only multiplied by infinity. God, holy, majestic, mighty, and glorious... gave His only Son to us, to be that Sacrifice that was payment for our sins. Christ Himself never sinned. He was the spotless sacrifice. Words alone fail to communicate the depth of God's sacrifice for us. Nevertheless, Ps Seng Lee referenced Reverend Doctor George Campbell Morgan who did manage to convey with clarity some deep revelations of the Cross. For brevity's sake, only two are listed here, for the sake of stirring thoughts and discussion.

“When amazement dies out, it is not that the Cross has been analysed, but that the gazer upon it has become blind” and “Because He is God, and because God is love, and love is never satisfied with the destruction of a sinner, but with the saving of a sinner.”

Such brevity cannot do justice to the thoughts and meditation on the Cross. It is highly encouraged for one to re-listen to the audio sermon, as well as to meditate on the Cross.

3. The depth of His Salvation

Ps Seng Lee exhorted the congregation to be aware of the blessings that are ours, knowing that Christ has paid the price for our sins and that we now belong to His family. A list of multiple blessings available to us can be found in Ephesians 1:3-14. With these blessings in mind, we need not live enslaved to the flesh and the world, but can claim all these blessings to live a fulfilling and Spirit-filled life in Christ.



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Conclusion

The song "*When I Survey The Wondrous Cross*" speaks of God's forgiveness for us. Beaten, bloodied, pierced and wounded... and the weight of all our sins taken onto Himself that we would not die, but have eternal life in Him. This is the love of God. We are thus called to love and forgive, because we have been loved and forgiven by the Almighty Himself.

Questions

1) What 3 things about sin do we need to remind ourselves about in order to grasp the depth of our sinfulness?

(Fill In Answer Here)

2) The depth of the Lord's Sacrifice for us is sometimes lost in the historical and event-based lens we sometimes adopt. In what way is the Jesus' death on the Cross real in your life?

(Fill In Answer Here)

3) Having experienced the love and forgiveness of the Lord, reflect on a person, community, etc.. that you would like to commit to the Lord and forgive.

(Fill In Answer Here)