



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC He Forgives
THEME God Answers Prayers

SPEAKER Ps Gary Koh
DATE 9 & 10 March 2024

MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Ps Gary opened his sermon by listing the reasons we experience guilt. It could arise due to objective guilt, which refers to the acknowledgment of wrongdoing or failure to fulfil certain responsibilities regardless of one's feelings. It encompasses legal guilt, social guilt, personal guilt, and divine guilt. On the other hand, it could also be due to subjective guilt, which is the feeling of having done something wrong or failing to meet obligations, whether or not that is true. The reasons can vary, including one's upbringing with unrealistic expectations, feelings of inferiority and societal pressure, and a sense of conviction from the Holy Spirit.

GOD'S POWER TO FORGIVE

All of us have sinned. The Bible records in Romans 3:23-24, "For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

- **Luke 7:36-50**

Jesus is invited to dine at the house of a Pharisee named Simon. While they are eating, a woman known in the town as a sinner comes in with an alabaster jar of perfume. She stands behind Jesus, weeping, and begins to wash his feet with her tears, wipe them with her hair, kiss them, and anoint them with the perfume. Simon, the Pharisee, is critical of Jesus for allowing this woman to touch Him. Jesus tells Simon a parable about forgiveness, then contrasts the woman's actions of love and humility with Simon's lack of hospitality. Jesus then assures the woman of her forgiveness and sends her away in peace, causing astonishment among the others present. Through this encounter, Jesus demonstrates the power of forgiveness and the importance of recognizing one's need for grace.

- **Luke 5:17-26**

A paralyzed man is brought to Jesus for healing. Since the crowd is so large, his friends lower him through the roof. Jesus sees their faith and surprises everyone by first addressing the man's spiritual condition, saying, "Friend, your sins are forgiven.", sparking controversy among the scribes and Pharisees. To demonstrate His authority to forgive sins, Jesus then instructs the man to rise, take up his mat, and walk, which he does, glorifying God. It serves as a profound demonstration of Jesus' divine authority to both forgive sins and perform physical healings, affirming His identity as the Son of God.

- **Luke 23:26-34**

In Luke 23:26-34, Jesus, weakened from the crucifixion process, is unable to carry His own cross. Simon of Cyrene is compelled to carry it instead. Jesus, amidst the agonizing journey to Golgotha, speaks words of compassion to the women who lament His fate. Upon arriving at the place of crucifixion, Jesus prays for forgiveness for those who crucify Him, exemplifying His divine mercy and love even in His own suffering.

Jeremiah 17:9 records that our hearts are deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Our common responses towards guilt and sin include: burying it, blaming others, or beating ourselves up. However, these reactions are not aligned with God's word as seen from Proverbs 28:13 "Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy."

The godly response to sin is characterized by repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10), and seeking forgiveness. Rather than hiding or justifying wrongdoing, it involves acknowledging one's faults before God and others (James 5:16), accepting responsibility and asking for forgiveness. In Psalm 51:1-2, the psalmist appeals to God for mercy and forgiveness, acknowledging their own transgressions. They plead for God's compassion to blot out their sins and cleanse them thoroughly, demonstrating a humble recognition of their need for divine forgiveness and restoration. As we receive forgiveness from God, let us also extend forgiveness to others (Matthew 6:12; Mark 11:25) and ourselves, embracing the grace and mercy that leads to spiritual renewal and reconciliation.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the sermon message emphasizes the boundless nature of God's forgiveness and the importance of confession and repentance in seeking it. 1 John 1:9 assures us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." This highlights the connection between confession, repentance, and the assurance of God's forgiveness. Thus, while God's forgiveness is offered freely, it is received through the humble act of acknowledging our faults and turning away from them. This process of confronting sin fosters spiritual growth and deepens one's relationship with God, as it opens the door for His transformative grace and mercy to work in our lives. Ultimately, the godly response to sin reflects a heart that yearns for righteousness and restoration, seeking to honour God in all aspects of life.

QUESTIONS

1. From the sermon, what do you understand God's about forgiveness? Can you share a moment when you felt truly forgiven?

2. What hinders you from accepting God's forgiveness or forgiving someone who has hurt you?

3. List practical steps you can take to either seek God's forgiveness, or forgive others and yourself? How would these steps improve your mental and emotional well-being?