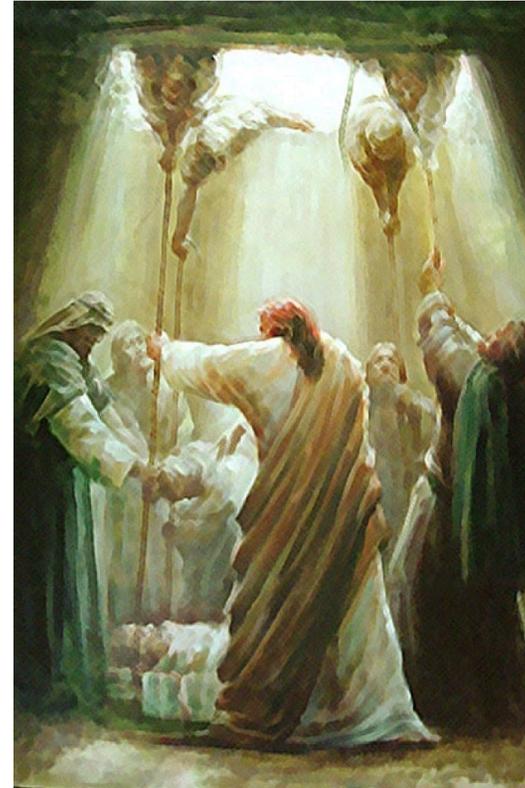


Link to Liturgy



7th Sunday in Ordinary Time Forgiveness: Body and Soul

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Lessons and Discussions

Page 5 – The Four Friends

“They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men.”

Page 7 – Easier to Forgive or to Heal

“What is easier”

Page 10 – Magic of Miracle

“We have never seen anything like this”

Introit Entrance Antiphon (Ps. 13:6) – Daily Roman Missal

This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme.

INTROIT

Domine, in tua misericordia

Ps 13 (12): 6

V
O Lord, I have placed my trust in your merciful love; * my heart has rejoiced in your salvation. I will sing unto the Lord who has dealt bountifully with me.

Learn how to Chant! - <http://youtu.be/0zbGS0Sv9cI>

Alternate options:

Collect – Roman Missal

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that, always pondering spiritual things, we may carry out in both word and deed that which is pleasing to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

well, Lady most comely. Prevail upon Christ to pity us.

V. Let me praise thee, most holy Virgin.

R. Give me strength against thine enemies.

Let us pray. Grant, O merciful God, defense to our weakness; that we who now celebrate the memory of the holy Mother of God may, by the aid of her intercession, rise again from our sins. Amen.

“The End” Notes

- [1] In Conversation with God 3, 53.1
- [2] In Conversation with God 3, 53.1
- [3] In Conversation with God 3, 53.1
- [4] In Conversation with God 3, 53.1 (Italic's added)
- [5] Letter to Diognetus, 5
- [6] <http://frkapaun.org/>
- [7] CCC 1421
- [8] Divine Intimacy pg. 241
- [9] Mk 2:5 footnotes
- [10] Divine Intimacy pg. 241
- [11] CCC 1503
- [12] Mk. 2:9
- [13] Rite of Penance
- [14] Psalm 103; Liturgy of the Hours; Week IV; Wednesday, Office of Readings
- [15] Psalm 103: 1,3-5,13-14
- [16] Jn. 20:20
- [17] Cf. Mk 2:7; Jn 5:18; Jn 7:12; 7:52; 8:59; 10:31, 33.
- [18] CCC 574
- [19] Mk. 2:7
- [20] CCC 589

The LORD has set his throne in heaven;
his dominion extends over all.
Bless the LORD, all you his angels,
mighty in strength, acting at his behest,
obedient to his command.

Bless the LORD, all you his hosts,
his ministers who carry out his will.
Bless the LORD, all his creatures,
everywhere in his domain.
Bless the LORD, my soul!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Marian Antiphon – Ave Regina Caelorum – Simple Tone

83b AVE REGINA CAELORUM

vi.

A -ve Re-gi-na cae-ló-rum, Ave Dó-mi-na Ange-ló-rum

Salve ra-dix, salve porta, Ex qua mundo lux est orta :

Gaude Virgo glo-ri- ó-sa, Su-per omnes spe-ci- ó-sa : Va-le

The image shows a musical score for the Marian Antiphon 'Ave Regina Caelorum'. It features three staves of music with square neumes. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 'vi.' (violin) instruction. The lyrics are written below the notes. The second staff continues the melody, and the third staff concludes with the final phrase. The score is presented in a simple, traditional style.

V. Dignare me laudare te Virgo sacrata.
R. Da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos.

English Translation

Hail, Queen of Heaven; hail, Mistress of the Angels; hail, root of Jesse; hail, the gate through which the Light rose over the earth.

Rejoice, Virgin most renowned and of unsurpassed beauty. Fare-

Gospel Reading – Mark 2:1-12 – Roman Missal

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark
- Glory to you Lord

When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was at home. Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door, and he preached the word to them. They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves, "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?" Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said, "Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk?' But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth" -he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home." He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

The Gospel of the Lord.
- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading

From the chapters On Charity by Saint Maximus the Confessor, abbot

Charity is a right attitude of mind which prefers nothing to the knowledge of God. If a man possesses any strong attachment to the things of this earth, he cannot possess true charity. For anyone who really loves God prefers to know and experience God rather than his creatures. The whole set and longing of his mind is ever directed toward him.

For God is far superior to all his creation, since everything which exists has been made by God and for him. And so, in deserting

God, who is beyond compare, for the inferior works of creation, a man shows that he values God, the author of creation, less than creation itself.

The Lord himself reminds us: Whoever loves me will keep my commandments. And this is my commandment: that you love one another. So the man who does not love his neighbor does not obey God's command. But one who does not obey his command cannot love God. A man is blessed if he can love all men equally. Moreover, if he truly loves God, he must love his neighbor absolutely. Such a man cannot hoard his wealth. Rather, like God himself, he generously gives from his own resources to each man according to his needs.

Since he imitates God's generosity, the only distinction he draws is the person's need. He does not distinguish between a good man and a bad one, a just man and one who is unjust. Yet his own goodness of will makes him prefer the man who strives after virtue to the one who is depraved.

A charitable mind is not displayed simply in giving money; it is manifested still more by personal service as well as by the communication of God's word to others. In fact, if a man's service toward his brothers is genuine and if he really renounces worldly concerns, he is freed from selfish desires. For he now shares in God's own knowledge and love. Since he does possess God's love, he does not experience weariness as he follows the Lord his God. Rather, following the prophet Jeremiah, he withstands every type of reproach and hardship without even harboring a evil thought toward any man.

For Jeremiah warns us: Do not say: "We are the Lord's temple." Neither should you say: "Faith alone in our Lord Jesus Christ can save me." By itself faith accomplishes nothing. For even the devils believe and shudder. No, faith must be joined to an active love of God which is expressed in good works. The charitable man is distinguished by sincere and long-suffering service to his fellow man: it also mean using things aright.

Responsory – Office of Readings

I give you a new commandment: love one another as I have loved you.

- Whoever loves his brother lives in the light.

Bless the LORD, my soul;
 all my being, bless his holy name!
 Bless the LORD, my soul;
 and do not forget all his gifts,

Who pardons all your sins,
 and heals all your ills,
 Who redeems your life from the pit,
 and crowns you with mercy and compassion,
 Who fills your days with good things,
 so your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

The LORD does righteous deeds,
 brings justice to all the oppressed.
 He made known his ways to Moses,
 to the Israelites his deeds.

Merciful and gracious is the LORD,
 slow to anger, abounding in mercy.
 He will not always accuse,
 and nurses no lasting anger;
 He has not dealt with us as our sins merit,
 nor requited us as our wrongs deserve.

For as the heavens tower over the earth,
 so his mercy towers over those who fear him.^d
 As far as the east is from the west,
 so far has he removed our sins from us.

As a father has compassion on his children,
 so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.
 For he knows how we are formed,
 remembers that we are dust.

As for man, his days are like the grass;
 he blossoms like a flower in the field.
 A wind sweeps over it and it is gone;
 its place knows it no more.

But the LORD's mercy is from age to age,
 toward those who fear him.
 His salvation is for the children's children
 of those who keep his covenant,
 and remember to carry out his precepts.

house showing what Jesus had done to him. The paralytic man showed no trace of paralysis: no limp, no slowness, nothing. What an incredible sight to see.

SPORTS – Kirk Gibson’s World Series Home Run – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 0:37

[http://mlb.mlb.com/video/play.jsp?](http://mlb.mlb.com/video/play.jsp?content_id=7143297&topic_id=&c_id=mlb&tcid=vpp_copy_7143297&v=3)

[content_id=7143297&topic_id=&c_id=mlb&tcid=vpp_copy_7143297&v=3](http://mlb.mlb.com/video/play.jsp?content_id=7143297&topic_id=&c_id=mlb&tcid=vpp_copy_7143297&v=3)

In one of the most dramatic games in World Series history, Kirk Gibson of the Dodgers, who had two bad knees and could barely stand, walked up to pinch hit in the bottom of the 9th inning in Game 1 of the World Series. With one swing of the bat, his walk-off homerun helped his team win the game and ultimately the team won the World Series. In one of the most famous broadcast announcements the announcer shouts, “I don’t believe what I just saw!” This saying was probably shouted many times when Jesus performed a miracle including the one in this Sunday’s Gospel reading.

There are those who try and rationalize everything that happens or try and give a reason to everything. While many things can be explained through science, logic, reason, intelligence, etc. there are many things of this world that cannot be explain. **Who are the “scribes” of today? How can you show them that there are miracles in this world?** Miracles don’t just happen everyday, but they do happen and have happened. We cannot just disregard them as anything but a coincidence or happen-stance. We must be open to miracles and to better understand things that we may have never seen before.

Do we have to believe in miracles? Yes. If we do not believe in miracles then we do not believe in the Immaculate Conception, the Incarnation, the healing of the paralytic, the feeding of the five thousand, the resurrection, and many other things of our Christian belief.

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Psalm 103

This can be chanted or spoken alternating stanzas

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

We can be sure that we know Christ, only if we keep his commandments.

- Whoever loves his brother lives in the light.

The Four Friends - Lesson and Discussion

“They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men.”

Many of us, when reading this Sunday’s Gospel reading, look at different points and people of the story: Jesus, the paralytic, a crowded house, and the Pharisees, who were also present. However, the friends of the paralytic, who came to help carry the paralytic to Jesus, are often overlooked. We see that the four friends go out of their way, “opening up the roof”, to bring their friend to Jesus. Like the leper in last Sunday’s Gospel, nothing is going to stop these friends from getting to Jesus.

Who were these four friends? We do not know a lot about these four friends, but what we do know of them is that they were close enough friends to rush him to see Jesus, carry him up on a roof, make an opening and then to lower him down to Jesus. Now that’s friendship!

What do the four friends see when they bring the paralytic to Jesus? They witness two miracles: First, mercy, the Lord’s forgiveness of their friend’s sin, “The men carrying the paralytic understand that Jesus has given their incapacitated friend the greatest good – freedom from his own sin.”[1] Second, they see the healing of his body. If we can be like the four friends and bring others to Christ, we could see the conversion and grace come upon them, and rejoice with them.

How are we like the four friends? Like the friends, we must bring others to Jesus Christ. “On many occasions the greatest favor, the greatest good we can do for a friend, brother, our parents and children is to help them see the beauty of divine mercy in the sacrament of penance. It is a good for the family, for the Church, for the whole of humanity, even though here on earth very few know about it.”[2]

ACTIVITY – True Charity

Read the Spiritual Reading in this Link to Liturgy Packet. How

are the four friends an example of Charity? How do the four friends live out in the Gospel what Saint Maximus the Confessor is preaching about?

How are we to help bring others to Christ? “The paralytic was healed body and soul. And his friends are an example for us today of how we should help others – mostly through our friendships, cooperating in apostolic initiatives, and fostering the good of society with all the means at our disposal, working for the common good, for a decent life and culture, and offering positive solutions, when faced with evil. We should do this in our own professional circumstances as well as in any other environment in which we happen to be involved (neighborhoods, parents’ associations, parishes...); it is here that we can cooperate in the building up of good and avoid cooperation in anything that is evil.”[3] **List some tangible things you can do to help the people around you come closer to Christ.**

“Cooperating in good implies, of course, avoiding any cooperation with evil, not only in important decisions but also in the small ways...not wasting money – even only small amounts – on magazines, newspapers, books, shows and entertainment, which because of their sectarian, anti-Christian or immoral character, damage the soul; buying one’s newspaper at a particular newsstand (even if it means a longer walk) rather than from one where publications are sold attacking the Church or Christian morals; avoiding a pharmacy selling contraceptives; or not buying a certain product (possibly very good) which is advertised on an immoral or anti-Catholic program on radio or television. And our action will be even more effective if we suggest a similar line of conduct to our friends. If lukewarm Christians were to stop buying certain magazines and publications, many of these would not survive. It is regrettable that, on many occasions, *much of the immense damage caused is being subsidized by Christians who, besides, are always complaining about society’s moral ruin.*”[4]

Why should I bring others to Christ? In today’s culture, we have become more and more isolated. When we see a homeless person on the side of the road, instead of offering food or water, we may think, “Get a job!” Other times we can think someone should have worked harder or the person is lazy. This is not our job or responsibility to decide these things. However, it is our responsibility to stop evil and bring good to all we meet whoever

“Jesus gave scandal above all when he identified his merciful conduct toward sinners with God’s own attitude toward them... But it was most especially by forgiving sins that Jesus placed the religious authorities of Israel on the horns of a dilemma. Were they not entitled to demand in consternation, ‘Who can forgive sins but God alone?’[19] By forgiving sins, Jesus either is blaspheming as a man who made himself God’s equal, or is speaking the truth, and his person really does make present and reveal God’s name.”[20] We know Jesus is the Son of God by fulfilling every Messianic Prophecy, he proves His claim to of being the Son of God, through His Life, through His passion, death, and resurrection.

In this Gospel Jesus already has one strike against Him because there are people who believe that He is only able to cure because of demonic forces. When Jesus says that He can forgive sins, this is strike two. The same people that are convinced that He is curing through the power of the devil, must also believe He is possessed to equate His own power, with that of God’s power. CS Lewis said that Jesus is either a liar, a lunatic, or He is Lord. Many did believe that He was a lunatic. Many other also believed that any power He had was not His own or that of God’s, but rather of the devil.

What was the punishment of blasphemy? It was death. As St. Cyril put it, “Now they accuse Him of blasphemy, anticipating the sentence of His death: for there was a command in the Law, that whosoever blasphemed should be put to death. And this charge they laid upon Him, because He claimed for Himself the divine power of remitting sins.” There are many communities that do not believe that Jesus is God. They will say that the Father and the Son are not one. Muslims and Jehovah Witness are among some of these communities. Anytime a person says, “Prove to me from scripture that Jesus was God?”, we can respond with the question, “Why was Jesus put to death? What was His crime?” Everyone knows that the crime of Jesus was blasphemy; He said that He was God. If Jesus, Himself, said that He was God, who are we to argue.

Why didn’t the Scribes try and put Jesus to death right away? While the scribes still believed Jesus should have been put to death, they could not disregard the miracle that just took place and what they just witnessed. That being a man who just a few moments ago could not get up from a stretcher, who could not walk in the house was now standing and walking out of the

sin too great that cannot be forgiven as long as you examine your conscience, embrace confession and seeks God's forgiveness with great faith. **How does Satan keep you down and not feel as if you have been forgiven of your past sins?**

Sin paralyzes the soul. The only person who can heal it is God. We are personally obligated and responsible to keep our soul healthy, and from going back to injury. Think for example an athlete, who suffers a horrible injury. It can take them a long time to recuperate. Once they are healed, they may be timid at first to go full strength and may be cautious. With our souls, after being forgiven we should be cautious and weary of going into the world. We say in the Act of Contrition, "I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin." We should not be afraid to not go at all, we just need to remember our resolve to "sin no more" and "to avoid the near occasion of sin." How can we do this? We can only do this "with the help of Your [God's] grace.". We need to go out into the world and be who God wants us to be: Holy witnesses to the mystery of God.

Magic or Miracle – Lesson and Discussion

"We have never seen anything like this"

When Jesus had cured the paralytic man, completely both soul and body, everyone was in awe. Most of the people seeing the miracle take place knew that God was at least working through this man from Nazareth. However, the Scribes tried to conclude a different reason as to why and how Jesus was able to cure this man. In today's society, we see many people try and disprove or shrug off miracles as fantasies. However, they are still real to this day.

Why does it matter if Jesus healed and forgave the sins of this man?

It is a big deal because we have to put ourselves in that place 2000 years ago. For the Pharisees and the scribes who were already suspicious of Jesus, saw Him heal people, which at that time they believed could happen through demonic spells or other black magic. "Because of certain of his acts – expelling demons, forgiving sins, healing on the Sabbath day... - some ill-intentioned persons suspected Jesus of demonic possession.[17]"[18]

Why did the scribes say Jesus was blaspheming? For Jesus to say He has the power to forgive sins means that He is God.

they are wherever they are. "What the soul is in the body, Christians are in the world."[5]

Story of Servant of God, Fr. Emil Kapaun

VIDEO – Father Kapaun – Part 1: 1:44 Part 2: 2:05

Part 1: <http://youtu.be/A5PcqQxayHk> **Part 2:** <http://youtu.be/7MLtfO3Mq-k>

"Father Kapaun, was born in Pilsen, Kansas in the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas on Holy Thursday, April 20, 1916. He was ordained as a Priest for the Diocese on June 9, 1940 and entered the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps in 1944. Separated from the service in 1946, he re-entered the Army in 1948 and was sent to Japan the following year. In July of 1950, Father Kapaun was ordered to Korea. On November 2 of that same year he was taken as a prisoner of war. In the seven months in prison, Father Kapaun spent himself in heroic service to his fellow prisoners without regard for race, color or creed. To this there is testimony of men of all faiths. Ignoring his own ill health, he nursed the sick and wounded until a blood clot in his leg prevented his daily rounds. Moved to a so-called hospital, but denied medical assistance, his death soon followed on May 23, 1951. The Diocese of Wichita and the Vatican have begun the formal process that could lead to Father Kapaun's canonization. In 1993, it was announced that Fr. Kapaun would receive the title of 'Servant of God'."[6]

We can learn from Father Kapaun, who was a friend and Jesus to everyone. While we may not be faced with being a prisoner of war, we are faced with people, who feel a sense of hopelessness in the world. We must be willing to help carry them to get healed just as the four friends did in the Gospel and just as Father Kapaun did in the Korean War.

Easier to Forgive or to Heal? - Lesson and Discussion

"What is easier"

Jesus is the greatest physician. Jesus is connecting two sacraments in the Gospel this week that He would later hand down to the Apostles: Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick. "The Lord Jesus Christ, physician of our souls and bodies, who forgave the sins of the paralytic and restored him to bodily health, has willed that his Church continue, in the power of the Holy Spirit, his work of healing and salvation, even among her own members. This is the purpose of the two sacraments of healing: the sacrament of Penance and the sacrament of Anointing of the

Sick.”[7]

Is there a pattern to the Seven Sacraments? Yes. There are three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. These fully incorporate us into the Body of Christ, the Church. **What if that Body gets sick?** There are two Sacraments of Healing: Anointing of Sick and Reconciliation. **What should a healthy body do?** It should serve God and neighbor out of charity. There are two Sacraments of service to the Church and world, these Sacraments also transmit physical and spiritual life; they are Holy Orders and Matrimony.

The first thing Jesus does before curing his disability was forgiving his sins. “Probably at that moment it was not his sins that were worrying him but his illness. Nevertheless, the first miracle that Christ performed for him was to free him from the weight of the sins that hindered his soul more than the paralysis that immobilized his limbs.”[8]

Why did Jesus heal the paralyzed man? Jesus heals the paralytic because of his faith. “It was the faith of the paralytic and those who carried him that moved Jesus to heal the sick man. Accounts of other miracles of Jesus reveal more and more his emphasis on faith as the requisite for exercising his healing powers”[9] It was also, “The healing of the body testifies to the remission of sins; it is an external sign for all to see of the pardon granted, and at the same time shows the generosity of God’s pardon; he not only destroys the man’s sins, but blesses him in a wonderful way.”[10]

Jesus also healed the paralyzed man for the same reason He healed many people; He is love and compassionate. “His compassion toward all who suffer goes so far that he identifies himself with them: ‘I was sick and you visited me.’ His preferential love for the sick has not ceased through the centuries to draw the very special attention of Christians toward all those who suffer in body and soul. It is the source of tireless efforts to comfort them.”[11]

What else does Jesus do for us? He forgives our sins. Sometimes this can be harder to feel. Think about it, when someone is healed of an illness or injury, they know it right away and can feel it. To say someone’s sins have been forgiven, it may not have a physical experience to it, but spiritually it is a huge relief. Jesus says to the people “What is easier, to say to the paralytic,

‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, pick up your mat and walk?’”[12]. He knew that even if he cured the man’s physical problems this would not heal his soul, which is far more important. He could move his legs again, but would be able to carry the weight of the sin he had on him? Probably not.

During the Rite of Reconciliation we hear the words of absolution, “God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”[13] Whether we feel it or not, if we have made a good confession, we are absolved from our sins. In Psalm 103 we pray, “As far as the east is from the west so far does he remove our sins.”[14] What prevents us from believing and trusting in the mercy and forgiveness of God? Not only should we believe that we are forgiven, but we should praise God for His great Mercy. We think of the order in which Jesus forgives the paralyzed man’s sins first and then cures him physically. Psalm 103 also says, “Bless the Lord, O my soul! ... He forgives all your iniquity; e heals all your diseases. He redeems your life from the pit; he crowns you with steadfast love and mercy. He satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagles. As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him. For he knows our frame, he remembers that we are dust.”[15] A good place to practice the thankfulness of mercy and forgiveness is by praying Psalm 103.

Since Jesus has the supreme authority to forgive sins because He is God, He also has the authority to pass on the ability to forgive sins through His apostles. At Jesus’ resurrection, He gives the power to forgive sins to the apostles, who are the first priests: “Whose sins you forgive are forgiven.”[16] A priest has the authority to forgive, only because He attained this power through the power of Jesus Christ, who is God.

[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson – Reconciliation]

Why is it hard to feel healed spiritually? It can be hard at times to feel the healing power of forgiveness because Satan does not want us to feel like we have been forgiven. He wants us to think we have not been forgiven or worse that we can never be forgiven of something that we have done. Know that there is no