

October 2024

BROADCASTER

A magazine of Worship Anew

*Reconciliation
& Forgiveness*

At One with the Cross

Embracing Reconciliation & Peace in Christ



Matthew F. Leighty
Matthew F. Leighty
Executive Director

Is there anything more significant in life than having Christ's peace? To be wholly reconciled to Him. No matter how much I may enjoy the things of this world, nothing compares to being in complete alignment with our loving Savior. The wonderful thing is we don't have to do anything to make this happen. Because of what Jesus did for us on the cross, we have peace, knowing we are one with Him.

Paul sheds light on this in Colossians 1:19-20 (ESV).

"For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."

In the heart of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Colossians, we find a passage that captures the essence of our faith. It tells us that Jesus Christ is the fullness of God made flesh. Through His sacrifice on the cross, Christ achieved the ultimate reconciliation, restoring all creation to harmony with the Creator.



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Worship Anew engages and equips aging adults with resources to live a full and abundant life in Jesus Christ.



For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Colossians 1:19-20 ESV

Through His blood on the cross, we find peace — a peace that is not merely an absence of conflict but the presence of restored relationships and eternal communion with God. This profound truth reminds us that in Christ, we are no longer estranged but brought into His holy family, fully known and fully loved.

In the verses of the hymn “Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive,” we are reminded of the profound truth that lies at the heart of reconciliation and forgiveness. The hymn, penned by Rosamond Herklots, echoes the Apostle Paul’s words in Colossians 1:19–20, inviting us to contemplate the fullness of God’s grace.

As we sing, “You taught us, Lord, to pray, but you alone can grant us grace to live the words we say,” we

acknowledge our human frailty and the assistance we need through Christ to genuinely forgive. This hymn is not just a nice melody; it is a prayer, a commitment, and a reflection of our journey toward peace through the blood of Christ. It encourages us to embrace the peace that surpasses all understanding from being wholly reconciled to our loving Savior.

Reflecting on this hymn is a powerful way to internalize the message of reconciliation central to our Christian faith. It serves as a reminder that, in Christ, we find the ultimate example of forgiveness, and through Him, we are empowered to extend that forgiveness to others, thus experiencing the peace of being one with Him.

As we explore this theme, Worship Anew continues its vital work, bringing the message of reconciliation we have through Christ.

The ministry’s resources are threaded with God’s redemptive plan, woven together to offer a perfect peace to a broken world in need. Here, we learn of the peace of Christ that surpasses all understanding — a peace that assures us we are forever at one with our loving Savior.

Lord, may our lives spread your peace.

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Speaking to the heart

Getty Music shares how their hymns make an impact at all stages of life

*By Ashley Wiehe
Director of Communications*

Hymns are an integral part of worship in the church.

They date back to the time of David in the Psalms and are an inspiration for much of the music that we hear from the choir loft, as well as on the Worship Anew program.

For Getty Music, hymns are at the heart of what they do. All of their music is scripture-based and reflect ones' hopes and dreams, as well as the laments of their hearts.

"It speaks to people at all stages of life," said Deborah Klemme, a violinist with Getty Music. "In my opinion, for a hymnody — in general whether it be old or new — the focus is more on God and who He is and what He has done for us and then how we respond. It's really meaningful."

Getty Music started in Northern Ireland when Keith and Kristyn Getty wrote "In Christ Alone," and has grown to include multiple writers and many musicians. Their music is sung at churches around the world, and their mission is to create modern hymns that churches can sing corporately.

"(They are creating) a body of songs that (churches) can sing that are based in scripture and that are good, singable melodies that can be used in all variety of contexts," Klemme said. "Whether it's with a pipe organ or with a rock band or something in between, the music speaks to you."

For Klemme, she stressed how important hymns are to people throughout their lives, especially those who are in the older generations.

"My grandfather lived to be 102 years old. In the end,

he didn't know much. He didn't know who I was, but he could still sing 'Great Is Thy Faithfulness,'" she said. "For many people who have been in the church their whole lives, ... you've sung these songs with your family, at funerals, at weddings, at all these big moments, then when you get into the later years of your life, those (hymns) are the things that you can really cling to."

She stresses that older generations also know the value of a good hymn — a hymn that shares the praises of their hearts but also the challenges that come with life.

"When you do a study of all of the hymns and a hymnal and things like that, the number of songs that deal with lament are very low. We have a lot of songs about singing when we're joyful and happy, but things are better when we just sing, 'I don't know why this happened,'" she said. "I think that those subjects are more likely to be found in a hymn that is scripturally based. There's a model for that in the Psalms."

She said that there is a resurgence among younger generations to find songs, especially hymns, that speak to truths — something that Getty Music stresses with their scripturally-based hymns. But, she admits that this is something that the older generations have already recognized and known for quite some time.

"I think that those are people who have really valued what Keith and Kristyn are doing in the songs that they're writing at their core level — that they have something deep and rich about life experiences, and just overall what scripture has to say about those things," Klemme said, adding that Keith and Kristyn are working on a new hymnal project which will be released soon. "With a hymn, you're actually singing scripture."



An Evening with Keith & Kristyn Getty: Live in Concert

Keith and Kristyn Getty, and special guests, Matt Boswell and Matt Papa, are on tour this fall across the United States, and are bringing a special concert to Fort Wayne, Ind., at 7 p.m. Oct. 28, which Worship Anew is helping to host. Tickets for all concerts are available at gettymusic.com/tour.



Keith and Kristyn Getty (right), and special guests, Matt Boswell and Matt Papa (above), are currently on tour in cities across the United States.





CAROLing to second chances

Man shares how it's never too late for a second career

By Sheila Banks
Communications Specialist

Proverbs 16:9 (ESV) says, “The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps.” James Tew can attest to that.

Tew, a communication and public relations professional from Indiana, recently found himself in a new role — executive movie producer.

“I never, never dreamed that I would write something that would be a movie,” Tew said.

When Tew’s three sons were in high school, they were part of a very active youth ministry at their church, and many of those students were involved in their high school’s theater program. Each year, the youth group performed a Christmas program for the church. One year, they performed “A Charlie Brown Christmas” and packed the house.

Following the success of that performance, the director lament(ed) that there’s not more popular Christmas stories that everybody’s familiar with that really (share) a gospel message,” says Tew.

Tew took that to heart and pondered what might be familiar for people and also have a strong Gospel message. This inspired him to write “CAROL” for his church youth group.

“CAROL,” written as a musical play, is based on “A Christmas Carol.” While it includes characters from Charles Dickens’ classic “A Christmas Carol,” it tells a different story. Main character, Solomon Lynch, is a self-centered slacker in a small Indiana town who comes face-to-face with Scrooge and his “associates” on Christmas Eve for a musical journey through his past, present, and future.

People enjoyed the performance, and some suggested to Tew that he should turn it into a movie.

Tew, aware of a Christian feature film director living in a nearby town, decided to reach out and send him the script.

“To my shock, I got an email back from him that said, ‘Yeah, this would make a pretty good movie,’” he said.

But there were two obstacles: financing and lack of original music.

At that time, Tew’s oldest son was getting ready to leave for college, so he put the idea on the back burner for a while.

Then a few years ago, after the kids were all out of college, Tew attended a men’s retreat. The speaker asked the group, “What are you going to do with your money in retirement? Are you going to hang onto it? Is retirement going to be jetsetting? Or are you going to use it to keep serving God?” Tew returned home and pondered this.

“I wonder if maybe we should take our retirement funds to try and get this movie done,” he suggested to his wife.

She had been thinking the same thing and readily agreed. So, obstacle number one, financing, was covered.

Obstacle two still remained — writing original songs.



Photos by Lauren Banks
Top left, photos from production show the process of bringing “CAROL” to the big screen. The middle photo shows James Tew, with his wife, Shannon, is the poster for the film.



Learn more about the movie “CAROL” and its release at Carolmovie.com or use your camera app to scan the QR Code.

heart. That’s the only way I can explain it,” Tew said.

After moving to a nearby town and onto a new church, Tew discovered that his new church’s music leader had prior experience writing songs. Tew would “plunk tunes out” on a keyboard to write the melody and continued writing lyrics. He would then send them to his worship pastor for feedback. The worship pastor confirmed the quality and added chords to the melody.

With obstacles removed, it was time to begin filming.

Filming took place in three northeast Indiana towns (Angola, Albion, and Kendallville) throughout the first three weeks of February 2024. Churches in the area came together to support the cast and crew through prayer, providing

Although Tew dabbled in creative writing for fun, he had never written songs, poetry, or music before.

“But as I was looking at different parts of the play ... songs were just coming to mind. ... God laid songs on my



meals, and serving as extras on set.

“That’s one of those things that’s awe inspiring — the whole body of Christ coming together,” Tew said. “It’s really been cool to see God working throughout this process.”

Time and again, God’s hand appeared to be at work.

For instance, Tew partnered with a ministry called Set Shepherds, which works with film productions to help coordinate meals, prayer partners, counseling, and more for cast and crew.

“This was the first production they’ve had that all the meals were provided by churches, and production itself did not have to pay out for any meals,” he said.

Another instance of God’s provision was with the weather. It was 60 degrees in February in northern Indiana, which was a miracle itself. Late one night while filming, the weather app indicated rain in the area, and eventually showed rain right on top of them, but it didn’t rain. They saw some sprinkles that night, while the next town seven miles north got drenched.

As the crew described, nothing should have been working, but God has His hand in it.

“Our goal with this whole project is that it gives people hope in Christ,” Tew said.

“CAROL” is a faith-based musical feature film scheduled for release in the fourth quarter of 2024.

The Lutheran Hour's Speaker to guest preach on Worship Anew

The Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler, speaker of The Lutheran Hour, shares his gifts of proclaiming God's Word on Worship Anew this October.

In 2018, Zeigler began working with Lutheran Hour Ministries, which is a global ministry with a flagship radio program. He will be speaking on Worship Anew on "Catastrophic Grace" on Oct. 27 for Reformation Sunday. Zeigler is returning for a second time on Worship Anew, having previously preached on the program in 2022.

Through his message, Zeigler hopes that viewers will find a new perspective on eternity and a deeper understanding of the meaning of grace.

"I hope that people will get a sense that God is the author of their stories and that they live on this great adventure. This present mortal life that we live is just the beginning," he said. "Grace is not just a free ticket into the afterlife. ... I hope that people will see their lives as a great adventure with Jesus."

Zeigler understands that the ministry at Worship Anew is unique, and he was able to experience that during a visit with members from his church.

"I hope that people will get a sense that God is the author of their stories and that they live on this great adventure. This present mortal life that we live is just the beginning."

Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

"I was visiting with a member of our church maybe a year and a half ago. Her husband was really sick and was close to death and died eventually. I remember sitting in their living room in St. Louis and talking, and she had the TV on with Worship Anew," he said, sharing her excitement to see the program. "It just became obvious to me how important this ministry was to her. ... Seeing the personal experience helped me realize the value of this ministry. You can hear about numbers, but that doesn't make the same impact as when it's somebody you know that it is helping."



The Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler will serve as the guest pastor on Worship Anew for Reformation Sunday on Oct. 27.

Zeigler is a graduate from the U.S. Air Force Academy with a general engineering degree and served five years in the Air Force. He left active duty in 2006 to prepare to be a pastor at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, completing a Master of Divinity in 2010 and a Ph.D. in 2014. He continues to serve part-time as an Air Force Reserve officer at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., and as a guest instructor at Concordia Seminary-St. Louis, in addition to his work with The Lutheran Hour.

His program will air on Oct. 27. It can be watched locally wherever Worship Anew is shown as well as online, streaming, or on our YouTube Channel. See all the ways to watch at WorshipAnew.org/programs.



Worship Anew in October

Year 2024 | Series B



Jesus, Our Brother

October 6, 2024 – Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Rev. Dr. Walter Maier III

Jesus is our brother because He is fully human as well as being fully God. The Son of God became man in order that He might be our great high priest and the sacrifice atoning for our sins. As our brother, Jesus knows all about the temptations that we experience. As the Son of God, He can give us the help that we need.

Sermon Text: Hebrews 2:11-12, 17-18

Readings: Psalm 128; Hebrews 2:11-12, 17-18; Mark 10:2-16



Jesus Loved Him

October 13, 2024 – Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

Rev. Thomas Eggold

The Law of God is centered in a love that cannot bear to see us dying in our sin. The Law of God is given to us to show us how great our need truly is, to uncover our attempts to do it on our own, and to lead us to the one and only path to eternal life.

Sermon Text: Mark 10:21

Readings: Psalm 90:12-17; Amos 5:6-7, 10-15; Mark 10:17-22



Beggar Faith

October 20, 2024 – Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

Rev. Shayne Jonker

Faith is a beggar before God. It offers nothing; it receives everything as a gift. When we look at Bartimaeus, the blind beggar, we see what faith in Christ looks like, and we take our place at His side, praying to Jesus for mercy.

Sermon Text: Mark 10:47

Readings: Psalm 126; Jeremiah 31:7-9; Mark 10:46-52



Catastrophic Grace

October 27, 2024 – Reformation Sunday

Rev. Michael Zeigler, Guest Pastor

Psychologists speak of “self-authoring” — a way of controlling the narrative to become the person you want to be. But what if God is writing the story of your life? In other words, what if we’re saved by grace?

Sermon Text: John 8:31-36

Readings: Psalm 46; Romans 3:19-28; John 8:31-36



PICKLEBALL: Volleying for this fast-growing sport

By Luanne and Gary Erdos

It started in early 2024 when my husband asked me if I would be interested in playing pickleball at a new indoor facility that had opened in my hometown.

I was game; however, I am a tennis player (my husband is not). I didn't want to abandon my tennis game and appear to be a traitor. And yes, there was a concern of whether it would hinder/help my tennis game. But, having together time with my husband and engaging with a paddle, ball, and net was right up my alley.

So, the journey began. We took the introductory course and quickly entered a new world of terminology (dink, kitchen, tagging) and scoring. (Sidenote: Could tennis and pickleball scoring be any more difficult for novice players?)

And now, we have fallen for pickleball!

We play every week and discuss our new-found love with others who have not yet been smitten by this sport

(which professes to be the fastest growing American sport).

The court movement and hitting the pickleball have been a natural experience for me, but the new challenges and tennis similarities are invigorating to me. Some things I have discovered along my journey include the following:

1. Communication with your doubles partner is helpful! (both on and off the court!)
2. Practice your serve as you are in control of this shot!
3. Lobbing is a thing — but more challenging in pickleball.
4. The pickleball does not bounce like a tennis ball.
5. Footwork is key as well as supportive shoes.
6. Pickleball has actually helped my tennis game with footwork (smaller steps) in addition to reaction time with volleying and seeing the court.
7. It has been a blast to meet new people and learn about their journeys with the sport.



We discovered that regardless of your experience or athletic ability, there's a place for you on the pickleball court (sort of like church!).



Luanne and Gary Erdos play pickleball at ACE Pickleball Club. They generally play with other couples that they meet at the club, and they play multiple times per week.

For my husband, this sport opened a whole new world of research (as he does with passion!) from the rules and etiquette of the sport, to paddles, shoes, tournaments, and using a ball machine.

We discovered that regardless of your experience or athletic ability, there's a place for you on the pickleball court (sort of like church!).

From novices just trying to get out and move around a bit to fierce competitors smashing that yellow ball back at you, you're sure to find someone fun to play with (again, hopefully like your church!).

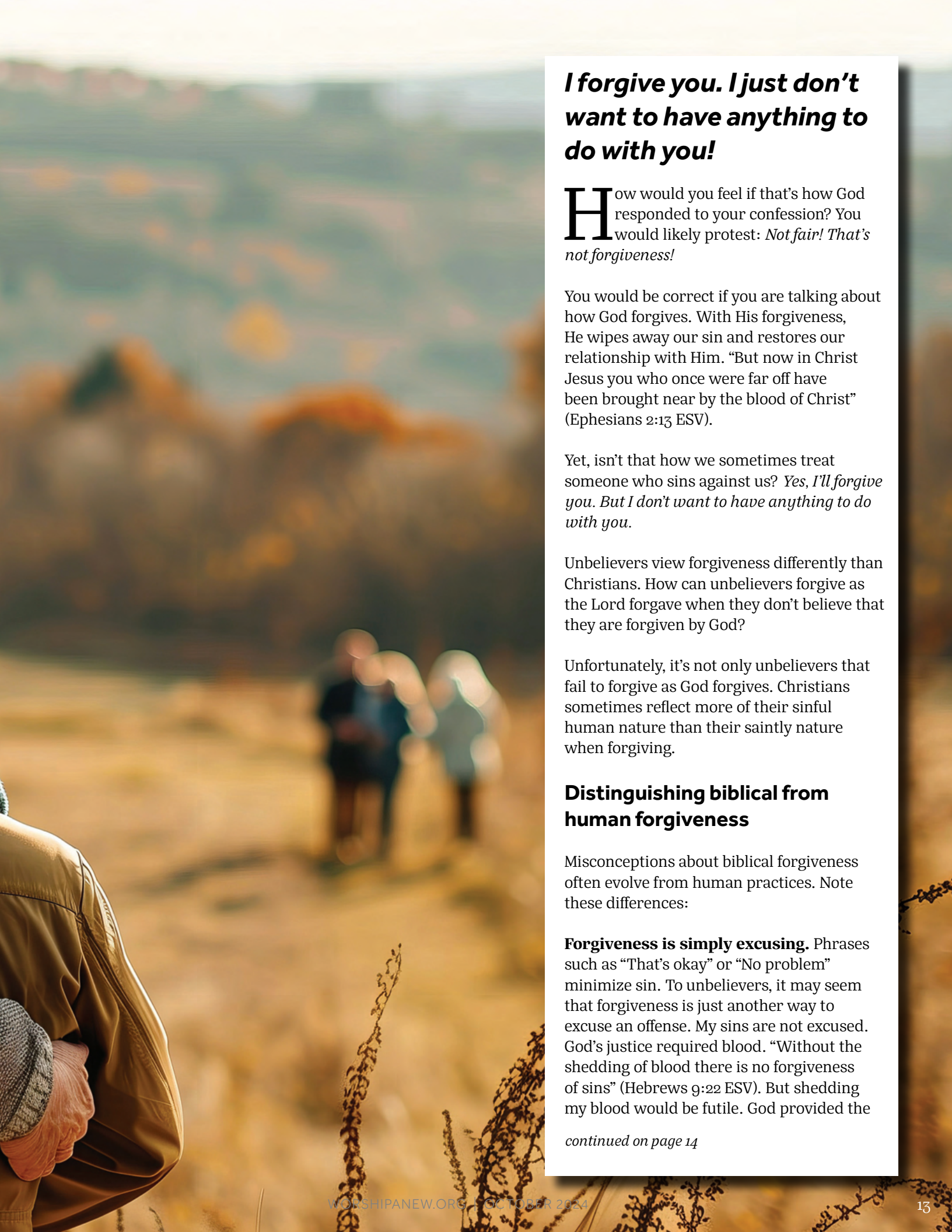
Luanne and Gary reside in Fort Wayne, Ind. Luanne is a teacher at Concordia Lutheran High School and Gary is the senior pastor at Trinity English Lutheran Church.



Forgiveness

Human vs. Divine

By Ted Kober



I forgive you. I just don't want to have anything to do with you!

How would you feel if that's how God responded to your confession? You would likely protest: *Not fair! That's not forgiveness!*

You would be correct if you are talking about how God forgives. With His forgiveness, He wipes away our sin and restores our relationship with Him. "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13 ESV).

Yet, isn't that how we sometimes treat someone who sins against us? *Yes, I'll forgive you. But I don't want to have anything to do with you.*

Unbelievers view forgiveness differently than Christians. How can unbelievers forgive as the Lord forgave when they don't believe that they are forgiven by God?

Unfortunately, it's not only unbelievers that fail to forgive as God forgives. Christians sometimes reflect more of their sinful human nature than their saintly nature when forgiving.

Distinguishing biblical from human forgiveness

Misconceptions about biblical forgiveness often evolve from human practices. Note these differences:

Forgiveness is simply excusing. Phrases such as "That's okay" or "No problem" minimize sin. To unbelievers, it may seem that forgiveness is just another way to excuse an offense. My sins are not excused. God's justice required blood. "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins" (Hebrews 9:22 ESV). But shedding my blood would be futile. God provided the

continued on page 14



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perfect sacrifice. “The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7 ESV).

I’ll punish you by withholding forgiveness.

You deserve my judgment and condemnation. My sins need to be punished, and without Christ I am condemned! Jesus paid the full price for my sins so God doesn’t punish me by withholding forgiveness. “But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5 ESV).

I won’t forgive you until you deserve it or earn it. Someone once told me she wouldn’t forgive her husband until he proved his contrition with fruit of repentance. Thanks be to God He doesn’t treat me that way! My forgiveness is not dependent upon my works to prove that remorse. “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:8–9 ESV).

I will never let you forget what you did!

My past sins will not be brought up and used against me. God promises not to remember my sins and torture me with my past. “For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jeremiah 31:34).

What else distinguishes biblical forgiveness?

With God’s forgiveness, I have been declared *not guilty*. “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1 ESV).

My sins have been washed away. God no longer views me as sinful but as holy. “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21 ESV).

Counselors tell clients that forgiving others brings inner peace. They advise forgiving for personal healing. Although forgiveness benefits the forgiver, the primary reason a Christian is

to forgive is not for personal therapy. He forgives because he has benefited from Christ's forgiveness. Peace does not come from our own actions, but from Christ. "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1 ESV).

The world may lead us to believe that to forgive is human. But that's inconsistent with Scripture. To forgive as God forgives is a divine gift, a privilege reserved for those forgiven through Christ.

To forgive as God forgives is a divine gift, a privilege reserved for those forgiven through Christ.

Forgiven children of God are called to *forgive as the Lord forgives* (see Colossians 3:13; Ephesians 4:32). We have been given a divine gift. And this gift is not meant for us to withhold or dole out according to our personal whims.

God empowers us to perform divine gifts through the gift of His Son. "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, *that we might die to sin and live to righteousness*. By his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24 ESV, emphasis added).

So, brothers and sisters, forgive — not as the world does, but as the Lord has forgiven you!

This piece was republished with permission from Ambassadors of Reconciliation.

The Apologizing & Forgiving Process

By Randall A. Schroeder, Ph.D.

1. REGRET

Regret is mild remorse or a slight feeling of sorrow for doing or saying something wrong. When you experience regret, you may say to yourself, "I should probably stop lying to my friend." Regret differs from repentance in that there is only sadness and no desire to make a commitment to cease the behavior. Nonetheless, regret is the initial feeling that leads to repentance.

2. REPENTANCE

Repentance involves three steps:

- a. identifying what you did or said that was wrong,
- b. having genuine sorrow for your wrong, and
- c. changing your behaviors so, with God's help, you do not commit the same wrong again.

Looking at the first example in the regret section, when truly repentant you understand that:

- a. it was wrong to lie to your friend,
- a. you have sorrow in your heart over the action, and
- a. you make a commitment to never lie to your friend again.

3. APOLOGIZING

An apology can be expressed verbally or through a written note. At this stage, you not only apologize for committing the wrong with a statement like, "I am sorry for lying to you" but you also seek forgiveness by asking, "Will you please forgive me?"

4. FORGIVING

Please remember that forgiveness is a gift and a promise, not a feeling. Similar to a pastor pronouncing the absolution, once a person has repented and apologized, you announce that they are forgiven with the words, "I forgive you." If declaring these words is particularly difficult for you to communicate honestly, then say, "With God's help, I will work at forgiving you."

5. RECONCILIATION

This completes the process as you work on building a new, healthy relationship. After the apologizing and forgiving process, restoration of your relationship can occur as you live in the present and look to a more positive future.

Dr. Randy Schroeder is a counselor and award-winning author of books such as "Simple Habits for Marital Happiness" and "Simple Habits for Effective Parenting." Read his weekly "Simple Yet Effective Habits" and find many other resources addressing marriage, parenting, and enjoying this life on his website, drrandyschroeder.com.



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A Gift of Grace Sponsorship (\$500) is one of multiple sponsorships scrolled on a program.



**What was the Protestant Reformation and why do churches celebrate it?**

Reformation is celebrated each year in October, and this year will be recognized on our program on Oct. 27. According to The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, the Reformation is described as:

“On Oct. 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted the 95 Theses — the ‘Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences’ — to the church door in a small city called Wittenberg, Germany. This event ignited the Protestant Reformation, and thus the Lutheran church officially commemorates this important anniversary on Oct. 31.”

The dispute Martin Luther had with the Church was that it had added doctrine invented by man to essentially buy trust in salvation and was deemphasizing the Gospel in doing so.

Many churches will celebrate the Reformation on the last Sunday in October with hymns and a message that focuses on God’s free gift of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Why was Martin Luther such a pivotal figure in the Protestant Reformation?

The event that sparked the Protestant Reformation was Martin Luther posting the 95 Theses in 1517 (read more above). His proposed reforms of the Church were not intended to split the Church, but were meant to bring the Church and its leaders to reflection and repentance for straying from biblical teaching by adding man-made rules to find the hope of salvation. When Luther posted his theses, he was a professor of biblical studies in the Church he sought to change.

Luther was previously on his way to becoming a lawyer, honoring the wishes of his father, when he committed his life to becoming a monk after being caught in a thunderstorm. His intelligence and commitment to continued learning and teaching and his struggle to understand and teach the Bible set him up to become a figure who could not only debate the learned Church leaders of his time, but also inspire others to reform the Church and to write in a way that could be shared with common German churchgoers. Martin Luther would go on to translate the whole Bible into German (it took him less than 100 days to translate the whole New Testament — quite a feat!).

Were there German translations of the Bible before Martin Luther’s translation of the Bible? If so, what was special about his translation?

There were other Bibles translated into German before 1534 (when Martin Luther had translated all of the Bible into German). There are a few things that set Martin Luther’s Bible apart, however. Other German translations relied heavily or solely on Latin translations of the Bible. Martin Luther first translated the New Testament in 1522 and used a Greek translation of the Bible to inform his translation. He also made it his goal to have his German version be readable by Germans from different regions and with varied reading abilities. Luther’s translation was also printed so that it could be reproduced faster and with less cost. Luther’s New Testament translation is also known as the Septembertestament because it was released widely in September at the Frankfurt Book Fair.

A note from the Editor ...

In our letters to the editor section, we would like to answer any and all questions that you have about scripture, aging well, and our ministry. Please send your questions to editor@worshipanew.org. Please know that we will try to answer as many questions as we can. Thank you and enjoy!

Don't confuse conflict resolution with reconciliation

By Ted Kober

What is the difference between conflict resolution and reconciliation? Consider these situations:

- ▶ Some people think that divorce resolves conflict. Yet the couple testifies that they have irreconcilable differences.
- ▶ Two business partners sue one another, fighting over assets and liabilities as they separate. A judge's decision resolves the matter, but these two former friends part as adversaries.
- ▶ A head elder and pastor continually disrupt meetings with their arguing. The head elder resigns his position, and his family transfers to another church. Both sides believe the problem is solved. But these Christian brothers never speak to one another again.

Conflict resolution focuses on resolving the material or substantive issues in a dispute, while reconciliation seeks to restore relationships by addressing the personal or relational issues.

If there are no relational issues to reconcile, conflict resolution may be adequate. Likewise, if the conflict centers solely on personal issues, reconciliation may be sufficient. However, the vast majority of disputes involves both kinds of issues. If parties attempt to deal with one and not the other, they will find the final solution incomplete and unsatisfactory.

In a legal dispute between a Christian ministry and a service contractor, the parties sought Christian conciliation to settle the matter rather than go to court. Both sides insisted that there were no personal issues to resolve. Their disagreement over \$85,000 of expenses focused on differing interpretations of their contract. Each stated that he had no personal grievance against the other.

As their reconciler, I was appointed to help them reach their own agreement through mediation, and, if unsuccessful, I would arbitrate (decide) the contract dispute. Craig represented the ministry's interests, and Ron presented his case as the service contractor. (Names have been changed to protect confidences.)

The mediation lasted 12 hours. We spent the first 11 hours on the personal issues that they said didn't exist, and then the money issue was easily resolved in one hour.

What were the illusive personal issues? When Craig's organization paid the final bill, Ron repeatedly demanded \$85,000 additional for expenses, but Craig refused. As tensions increased, Craig instructed his administrative assistant to take messages, which he didn't return. He told her Ron was a stubborn fool, and Craig didn't want to waste any more time dealing with him.

As Ron realized that Craig was stonewalling, he became frustrated with Craig's assistant, calling Craig names. This angered Craig, who griped to co-workers about Ron's unchristian behavior. Craig advised them to also avoid talking to Ron. Meanwhile, Ron grumbled about Craig and the ministry to his other clients. He slandered Craig's character and questioned the integrity of the ministry.

From a business viewpoint, both men felt justified. After all, they reasoned, they were simply "telling the truth" and warning others about doing business with irresponsible people. But from a biblical perspective, both were guilty of sinning against the Eighth Commandment. Instead of putting the best construction on things, they demeaned one another in gossip. Moreover, their actions proved a poor witness to Christ. God declares such behavior sinful. Further, unconfessed sin harmed their relationship and undermined trust.

Conflict resolution focuses on resolving the material or substantive issues in a dispute, while reconciliation seeks to restore relationships by addressing the personal or relational issues.



Privately, each was asked to compare Ephesians 4:29-32 to his attitudes and words. Examining themselves against God's Word, they recognized their sins against God and one another. Meeting together, they confessed and forgave as God had forgiven them. They reconciled their relationship by addressing the relational issues they claimed did not exist.

Following reconciliation, Craig and Ron reached agreement on the financial issue in 60 minutes. Trust was rebuilt through mutual confession and forgiveness, and they were able to negotiate a solution that had eluded them for months.

Without reconciliation, conflict resolution becomes more difficult. When we sin against one another, we tear down trust and erect walls that divide. Negotiating material issues requires more effort as we vie to protect our own interests. But those who live as forgiven children of God look not only to their own interests, but also to the interests of others (Philippians 2:3-4).

Many people, like Craig and Ron, contend that they have no personal issues to address — no sin to confess and no wrongs to forgive. They merely need to fix the problem. But such attitudes are naïve and contradict what the Scriptures teach. As saint and sinner, we struggle with sinful selfish desires.

Conflict reveals the Old Adam in us, as James teaches: "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures" (James 4:1-3 NIV).

If we convince ourselves that we have no personal sin issues to address, John writes that we deny the truth: "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves, and the

truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8 NIV).

Over time, resolving disagreements without reconciling erodes a relationship. We may solve problems, but trust in each other withers. Once friends, we identify the other as an opponent and eventually the enemy.

Uncomplicated issues now become major battlegrounds. We elevate desires, even godly ones, into demands. If we don't get what we want, we judge the other as wrong or evil. And then we punish by the way we treat one another.

Our greatest conflict in life is with God. Isaiah proclaims, "Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2 NIV). Paul notes in Romans 5:10 that we are enemies of God.

What is the consequence of being an enemy of God? "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23 NIV). So, from God, do you want conflict resolution or reconciliation?

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ that He chose not to allow us to suffer the just consequence of our sin, but while we were still sinners, God reconciled us to Himself through Christ. God did not wait for us to beg for mercy. Instead, He initiated reconciliation by sending His Son to restore our relationship to Him.

Reconciliation requires much more work than conflict resolution. But we are one people forgiven by God who believe in restoring relationships.

Reconciliation or conflict resolution? Both are usually necessary. May the Holy Spirit guide us as we wrestle to resolve difficult substantive issues so that we will be compelled by Christ's love to focus on reconciliation.

This is the first of two articles written for President's Leadership News in the March 2010 issue of The Reporter, by Ted Kober, president of Ambassadors of Reconciliation. It is printed here with permission.



The Poison of Unforgiveness

From Ambassadors of Reconciliation

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. Matthew 6:12 ESV

“**H**e’ll get my forgiveness, but not until he deserves it!” “I forgive her. I just don’t want to have anything to do with her again!” “I’ll forgive him, but not until he’s suffered for a while.” Praise God that His forgiveness is different than ours!

A barrier to reconciliation is the withholding of forgiveness from someone who has hurt us deeply. As one writer noted, “Unforgiveness is the poison we drink hoping the other person will die.” Yet, we still struggle to forgive as God forgave us.

Unforgiveness gnaws at us. It builds walls between us and the ones we won’t forgive. In teaching the Lord’s

Prayer, Jesus highlights the relationship between our forgiveness from God and forgiving of others. You need not think long to see how often this is true. Refusing to forgive can begin a process of separating us from God. The wall we build against our enemy becomes a wall between us and God.

Those walls are tragic. Christians know how precious God’s forgiveness is and how undeserved it is. No matter what we do, how badly we sin, *we are forgiven*. Not because we deserve it. Simply because Jesus’ blood was shed for our sakes. Our sins were nailed to the cross, and we are forgiven! Believing in the forgiveness of our sins empowers us to tear down the walls of our unforgiveness.



Reflection Questions:

Identify someone that you are currently resisting or struggling to forgive. What has he/she done that has hurt or offended you so deeply?

What impact has withholding forgiveness had on you?

How has your worship of God been affected by withholding forgiveness?

How has bitterness, anger, malice, or unkind thinking toward this other person occupied your thoughts? How often does this happen?

In your mind, what needs to happen to help you overcome your struggle to forgive?

What does God require of you before offering you forgiveness? (See Romans 5:8).

What does God require of the other person before offering forgiveness?

Pray the Lord's Prayer, pausing as you pray the petition, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

This month's study text:

The Lord's Prayer

5 "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

7 "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. 9 Pray then like this:

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
10 Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us this day our daily bread,
12 and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 6:5-15 (ESV)

Prayer:

Dear Father, soften my heart. Tear down the walls between me and the ones I struggle to forgive. As you have forgiven me, help me to forgive others. I pray in Jesus' name and for the sake of His innocent suffering and death. Amen.

Simple Christian Halloween treats for children

By Julie Beers



Halloween is a fun time as you see kids get dressed up and walk around the neighborhood, and of course, they are asking for some treats! Here are some easy and creative ways that you can share some treats with the neighbor kids this year and share the Gospel at the same time.

Pirate Treasure Treat Bag

What's included:

- Gold Bridal Bags (These can be found at Hobby Lobby).
- Chocolate Coins
- Hershey Chocolate Nuggets (a variety of kinds, but be sure to create some without nuts for kids with allergies)
- A Bible verse (I suggest Matthew 6:21 ESV)

How to make them:

- Take a Gold Bag and add 5 Coins to the bag (you have started to collect the pirate treasure!)
- Add 4 Hershey Nuggets to represent the treasure chests
- Use Canva.com (a free, online website for cute designs) to create your verse. Canva has preset designs. Download the design, print in a small square (about 2-3 inches), and use a holepunch to make the hole.
- Connect the verse to the Gold Bag using the strings on the bag.
- And now you have your Pirate Treasure Treat Bag!

Christian Pumpkin Halloween Bookmarks

What's Included:

- Reese's Peanut Butter Pumpkins
- Halloween bookmarks (These can be found on Amazon.)
- Orange Ribbon

How to make them:

- Take your ribbon and loop it through the hole on the bookmark.
- Tie the ribbon around the Reese's Pumpkin.
- And voila! You have your Christian Pumpkin Treat!

Julie Beers is a grandmother, avid crafter, and the Major Gifts Officer at Worship Anew.





Autumn

Word Search

ACORN

N M F X R R P F V M I T

LEAF

H B J P Z B U S W R I C

PINECONE

B B F S L O M Q E V S I

MUSHROOM

Y D M E R N P U L I Y G

PUDDLES

Z D E O P F K I L M U D

PUMPKIN

R G C H U I I R I U F H

SQUIRREL

U K B Z D R N R E S V D

WELLIES

V X H Z D E Z E S H E N

YELLOW

I Y E L L O W L C R R U

BONFIRE

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MUD

E C Y C S D P V C O N N

COSY

T L U Z X L E A F M M E

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