

Forgiveness

Several years ago, our daughter was in a Maundy Thursday performance at her church. In the setting there were groups of people scattered across the front of the sanctuary. Our daughter came in dressed in the costume of a woman in the time of Jesus. She began to go up to each group of people and ask them a question. The questions were "Have you seen my son?" "I can't find my son, have you seen him?" She would describe her son to them as being fair, handsome, kind, wise, giving, loving to his mother, caring for the poor. The kind of son everyone wants. As she went from group to group, you could feel her pain at not being able to find him, to not know what had happened to him. As I sat there with tears at this poor mother searching for her lost son, she approached the last group. Someone said, "What is your son's name?" She then replied, "Judas." You could hear an audible gasp from the audience. We don't think of Judas as a good person, loved by his mother. Jesus chose him as one of the twelve. He had been active in the ministry, handling the purse strings, caring for the poor and the needs of the disciples, following Christ. But was he a manipulator seeking to force others to do what he wanted or was there wrong in his heart. Then he became the unthinkable, the betrayer, the Judas. His name became ever after associated with evil. It is reported that Judas, realizing his sin, killed himself. I have often wondered, would Jesus have forgiven even Judas? If Judas would have gone to the foot of the cross, laid his sin there, asked for forgiveness, and accepted Christ as his savior, would Christ have looked down and forgiven him? Was Judas evil or was he used or was he the personification of evil that grows in some humans or did he just not believe in Christ. Was he too close to see the picture? Could he not believe that this man he had traveled with, learned from, ate meals with and watched as he taught and performed miracles was the son of God, the living Christ?

Colossians 1:13-14 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Dear Lord, forgive us our sins, the times we have betrayed others, the times when we have turned from you and from the cross. The times when we have broken your heart. May your forgiveness draw us closer to you, closer to redemption, closer to each other. May we forgive as we are forgiven. In the name of Christ. Amen.

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