

FORGIVENESS IS GOD'S GREATEST GIFT

*"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just
to forgive us our sins and
to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
1 John 1:9*

REFLECTION

We have all sinned (Rom 3:23) through thoughts, words and deeds. And when we become Christians, we are not immune to sinning against God and our fellow men. Even as Christians, we need God to continue His work of moulding and refining us into His likeness; we need His forgiveness.

For some of us, we have caused pain and anguish to our loved ones and especially to God. When we realized that we have done wrong against God, we do feel deeply remorseful. We might even feel that we have grieved God and our loved ones so much that nothing can redeem us. Guilt and shame meet us at such times. Where can we go? What can we do? The thing we may want to do to ease these feelings is to dig a really deep hole and hide ourselves in it. We want to escape from all these thoughts and feelings.

But God's word today reminds us that when we come to Him and confess our sins, **HE IS FAITHFUL...TO FORGIVE** our sins. That is all that He requires of us: just approach Him as we are, warts and all, and confess our sins before Him. The assurance from God's word is that when we repent, He will forgive us and cleanse us from our wrongs. Our God who forgives the repentant sinner will do His transforming work through the Holy Spirit and breathe new life into our brokenness to make us whole.

PRAYER

Merciful Father, Generous God, we confess that we often fall short of Your expectations for us and grieve You. Yet You are gracious to forgive us when we confess our sins. Your word says that You will cleanse us from all unrighteousness and make us right with You again. Thank you for Your everlasting mercy and abundant grace. As we receive Your forgiveness, help us to walk aright with You that we may please more each day. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

SUPPLICATION

- Thank God for the gift of forgiveness that God extends to us in our Lord Jesus Christ. Pray that we would be resolute not to commit repeated sins again. Instead, pray that we will walk in obedience to God. Seek the Lord for strength to rise above temptations and daily put our old self to death on the cross. Pray for more in-filling of the Holy Spirit in our lives such that He has the pre-eminence in every aspect of our lives.
- Pray for those who are struggling with their sins. They may be angry with themselves or even harbour the thought that they are not worthy to be forgiven. May the Lord protect them from self-condemnation and self-hate. Ask the Holy Spirit to work His grace in their lives such that there be genuine conviction and prompting that would lead them to confess their sins and receive God's forgiveness in the process. May they encounter the God of mercy and grace.
- Pray for Christians to be agents and examples of forgiveness. Fellow believers can often be the cause of much bitterness and brokenness in the body of Christ. Pray that we would be gracious to extend forgiveness and receive forgiveness in order that we may exemplify the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Pray for those who have been victims of unjust and exploitation; be it individuals, communities or nations. May God's boundless forgiving nature be an example for us to follow that we, who have been hurt, may learn to forgive as God has forgiven us. Pray for reconciliation and peace to prevail.

*"God's forgiveness allows us
to be honest with ourselves.
We recognise our imperfections,
admit our failures,
and plead to God for clemency."
-Jonathan Sacks-*

**If you need any prayer or pastoral care support, kindly
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