

BEYOND SUNDAY: May 30, 2021



Series Page: wearepcc.com/btb

Message: The Balm of Forgiveness

At PCC, we want any person from any racial or ethnic background to feel like they are among family. In order to do so, we must become more aware of God's heart for racial reconciliation, key historical events, and the harm caused to many. Each week, our "[Be The Bridge](#)" (BTB) series will help us journey toward greater understanding, empathy and, in time, action. This week, we focus on how seeking and extending forgiveness is essential to being a bridge builder.

#1

In the past week, what awareness have you gained when it comes to the topic of race and racial reconciliation? Or since the beginning of this study, how has God transformed you?

#2

Read these passages out loud. [Psalm 103:10-12](#), [Matthew 5:43-44](#), [Matthew 6:12-15](#), [Luke 17:3-5](#), [Ephesians 4:32](#), [1John 1:9](#). What feelings arose when they were read? What is this telling you about what it means to be a follower of Christ and His kingdom ways?

#3

Gary Gaddini, our Lead Pastor, stated in his Sunday message the following:

God asks you to forgive because He loves you! God doesn't ask you to forgive for the sake of the person who sinned against you...God asks you to forgive for your sake, to set you free! Doesn't mean it's easy—Increase our faith! Easy is choosing to be bitter, it will take faith to forgive!

How do you see faith as an essential part of forgiveness? How have you seen forgiveness bring freedom to you and others?

#4

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. declared: "*Forgiveness is not an occasional act; it is a permanent attitude.*" How do you know when you have truly forgiven someone for something? How is forgiving different from trusting someone?

BEYOND SUNDAY: May 30, 2021

#5

Reflect on these quotes from BTB pp. 114, 117.

In our Be the Bridge groups, we hope to cultivate spaces of forgiveness. After all, we're asking members—people of all colors—to examine their complicity in racism, and if there's no room for forgiveness, we'll never get the sorts of honest confessions needed to create long-term healing and wholeness...Forgiveness is a healing balm. It's the way to freedom, the way to peace. It's the way to build lasting bridges too.

Brainstorm things that can hinder forgiveness from happening.

#6

Examine your life with the intent of leading you toward forgiveness.

- A. For what do you need to be forgiven? In general ways and/or specific racist, colorist, or other forms of prejudice and discrimination. Who might you need to call or visit and ask for forgiveness?
- B. Who do you need to forgive? In general ways or specific ways of racism toward you or another. Include those who have created structural privilege.

As a group or individually, declare the prayer below or use the liturgy from BTB p.120:

A Prayer of Forgiveness (BTB p.119 at the end of Chapter 6)

God, I thank you for your Word and everlasting love. Thank you for providing us a clear path to reconciliation, one that builds bridges, closes gaps, and showcases your plan for us all. There is so much strife and conflict attempting to distract us from who you are, closing our minds and hardening our hearts against one another. I pray we are loosened from the chains of unforgiveness and that our hearts are softened toward one another so our journey forward together as your children will be victorious. Help us see your love in one another and strengthen our desire for community and oneness in you. Open our ears to listen to the stories of those around us so that we may better understand one another. Help us to release negative thoughts and ideas about others, even if there are past hurts, and to forgive. Thank you for forgiving us and fiercely loving us even when we have chosen to turn our backs on you. It is only by your grace we are able to walk this path. In your name, amen.

Resources

1. Get a FREE *Be the Bridge* book! [Pick up at church or [request to be sent to your home](#)]
2. Get in a [Be the Bridge Group](#)
3. Reading Schedule: [Be the Bridge](#)