

# Forgiveness Meditation – Cross Service

## Service #3

**Place:** Chapel Service

**Leader & Length:** Spiritual Director, 10 Minutes

**Introduction:** This meditation recaps and focuses on the importance of forgiveness. This meditation leads into the Cross Service where the candidates nail to the cross the names of those they need to forgive.

## **FORGIVENESS:**

The ability to realize the fullness and freedom of the life in grace is hampered by unforgiveness. We are commanded to forgive "seventy times seven". This does not mean we are to keep count and forgive someone up to 490 times. It does mean that in many cases we have to forgive someone over and over again.

Think about this:

- For every minute you are angry with someone, you have lost a minute of your own happiness.
- Every time you do, or don't do, something because you are mad or hurt with someone, you are letting that person control your life.
- Many of us have lost loved ones, or missed opportunities, or feel like God has forgotten us. Some of us are even angry with God for something.
- We need to give up the magic wish. The magic wish is "I wish (he/she) were different". People don't change people. Only God can change a heart.
- We all engage in "self-talk". These are the things we think about ourselves in our mind. Sometimes we say "Way to go!" or "Alright, that was good!". Most of the time we say "You idiot, why did you do that?" or "I can't believe I said that!". Studies say that up to 90% of our self-talk is negative.

Jesus said, "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you."

In 2 Corinthians, Paul admonishes us to forgive each other "...less Satan should take advantage of us". In Colossians we are told that as Christians we should put on tender mercies, kindness and long suffering. We are to bear with one another "...forgiving one another even as Christ forgives us".

Take a moment and think of those you may be mad at. Think of those who may have hurt you or disappointed you. Think of those who frustrate and annoy you. As you think of them, write

their names on the pieces of paper we gave you. You may need to write down your parents, brother or sister, or other family member. You may need to write down the name of a teacher or that of a friend. You may need to write down the name of God. You may even need to write down your own name. Only as we forgive others can your Heavenly Father forgive us.

Please pray with me as we think of those we need to forgive.

### **CROSS SERVICE:**

(Have Chapel Chas bring in cross and drop it in the center of the floor. They will also bring in a hammer and some nails. Make sure these preparations have been taken care of early in the day on Saturday.)

The Chapel Chas have brought in a cross similar to that on which Jesus died for us. We are now going to take our hurts, resentments and disappointments and nail them to the cross. We need to let go of our anger and bitterness. Let Jesus cast it into the sea of His forgetfulness. Let Jesus help you forgive those that have spitefully used us. Let Jesus help you forgive yourself. As you feel led, come forward and nail your names to the cross.

(After a few minutes, have quiet music while everyone finishes. Be sure to give the candidates and team enough time to respond.)

Mommy / Daddy Hugs: (Arrange with three or four adult members of the team to "stand in" for this portion of the service.)

For most of us, no matter what age we are, one source of hurt is our parents. Many times it is not necessarily for what they do, but for what they don't do. Many of us have never heard the words "I love you" from our fathers. Maybe we were in a school play and our parents didn't have the time to come. Maybe we made a good grade on a test and the only response we got was "Why didn't you do better?". It is tragic when this situation is allowed to exist, perhaps throughout our adult lives and our parents die, never knowing how we felt.

Some of the members of the team have volunteered to stand in for your Mothers and Fathers. Or maybe a teacher or coach, or uncle or grandparents, or any other adult that may have hurt you. Maybe you just need a hug from your Mom or Dad. Maybe you need to tell them about a time they hurt you and you don't think you can tell your real parents. These people will stand in for the person in your life that you need to talk to - whoever that is.

Feel free to come up now. Let them hug you. If you just need to hear the worlds "I love you", let them know. Take your time - but let this be a time of healing for you.