

The Christian Forgiveness Revolution:

Christina Haugen, wife of the Humboldt Broncos Coach, Darcy Haugen, offered forgiveness to the truck driver Mr. Sidhu, who struck the team bus. Christina said she is still angry about the crash that impacted her entire family. “I want to tell you I forgive you,” she told Sidhu in court. Darcy’s brother remembered the Broncos coach as a kind man and a Christian, who never held a grudge and always chose to see the good in people.

“Baggage” summary: forgiveness is a major tenant of our faith. It sounds simple but feels complicated. What does it really mean and how do we do it?

1st week: God’s desire to extend forgiveness to the world. Light of the nations.

2nd week: Receiving forgiveness from Christ – Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

This week: Extending forgiveness to others and what does this mean?

- Allowing God to do something new, new space, new beginning.
- Doesn’t mean trusting a person or becoming best friends with them, this could be harmful. Difference between forgiveness (canceling a debt) vs. reconciliation (restoration of a friendship). Forgiveness precedes reconciliation. In the sacrament of reconciliation, God always restores fully our friendship with Him.
- Forgiveness is not about justifying bad behaviour or accepting injustices that need repairing/healing. Just a 1st step in that direction.
- Forgiveness not about changing others, it is about changing me!

1 Corinthians letter dealing with divisions: “for it has been reported to me...that there are quarrels among you...Has Christ been divided? I belong to Paul, Cephas, Apollos...” Paul’s discourse on true love: “love is not resentful – does not brood over injury, but rejoices in the truth!” The Greek verb *logizomai*, a favorite of Paul's, means to make a list of offences, locking them up in the **safety-deposit box** of one's memory, and bearing an offense at another. All of this is occupying space God himself would like to occupy in our minds and hearts.

Repentance/conversion occurs in everyday life (Gospel): there doesn’t have to be a specific “perfect” moment for forgiveness, for a metanoia – a new way of thinking. Where did the apostles encounter the Lord? In the midst of their daily work. We are going to practice what we have been reflecting upon for the past few weeks. Offering forgiveness in pray can unleash grace upon another person: **In the name of Jesus... I forgive (this person, this event in my life), and I rebuke any bitterness, resentment, hatred or anger that I feel toward them, and I send this all to the foot of the cross in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Amen.**