

WORSHIP @ HOME



WHAT DOES YOUR SPRING WARDROBE LOOK LIKE?



Preparing for worship:

Christian meditation music <http://www.viewpure.com/g51ExyTuZbM?start=0&end=0>

Take a few moments to be still.

The Greeting:

ALL: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN'. Our tradition is to cross ourselves as this is said.

Opening prayer and lighting the candle:

O God, as light comes from this candle,
 May the blessing of Jesus Christ come to us,
 Warming our hearts and brightening our way.
 May Christ our Saviour
 Bring life into the darkness of this world,
Amen.

Bible Reading:

A reading from Colossians chapter 3 verses 12-14

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

A message:

This is the last in this current series of Worship@Home. We are left with the often challenging task of 'putting on forgiveness'. This is not always easy, nor is it easy to fully understanding the significance of forgiveness in the Bible. However, exploring forgiveness from the perspective of the Bible helps us understand what it really means when we say 'I forgive you'. It can help us to extend genuine forgiveness to others and will allow these three simple words to be more than an empty sentiment.

Forgiveness is fundamental to the character of God. Throughout the Bible, God is described as slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin (Numbers 14:18). Jesus was uncompromising in his command to forgive. Forgive, he said, 'seventy times seven' (Matthew 18:21). In other words, forgive and keep on forgiving without limit. Indeed, forgiveness was at the heart of everything he did and is at the heart of the Lord's Prayer. When Jesus declared a person's sins to be forgiven, it often aroused the anger of those who were less willing to forgive than he was and yet a prayer for the forgiveness of his persecutors was on Jesus' lips as he died. We forgive because we are forgiven. Paul says: 'Be compassionate and kind to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you' (Ephesians 4:32).

Remember, forgiveness cannot be given or received unless it is asked for, and the asking must be genuine and from the heart. Too often 'sorry' is said very easily, implying: 'All I need to do is say I'm sorry and everything will be OK'. Real repentance demands that we take what we have done wrong with the utmost seriousness and have a deep desire not to do it again. Forgiveness is costly to all involved. Once we understand that, forgiveness can be truly liberating both for the person who is forgiven and for the person who forgives.

Christ has forgiven us, and out of that abundance of grace, we can pay this forward to others. Take off vengeance and put on forgiveness. Pray for forgiveness and reconciliation. Forgiveness does not end when the words 'I forgive you' come out of your mouth, but continues to seek restoration and healing, just as God continues to restore us more and more into relationship with Him. We must remember that at its heart, even forgiveness itself is not something we can muster up by sheer will; rather, it is an overflow of the outpouring of God's grace in our own lives.

A time for reflection:



How will you dress up in forgiveness? What do you need to seek forgiveness for? Who do you need to forgive? Take a few moments to consider the healing power of forgiveness and what it means to our lives.

<http://www.viewpure.com/h1Lu5udXEZI?start=0&end=0>



Closing prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father,
May we be like Jesus, who was the first one to love. When God forgives us, He gives us the power to forgive. May the river of God's life flow through us so that we bless everyone we meet. May we remind people of how much they are loved by God and forgive as we have been forgiven.

ALL: Amen.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of
the Holy Spirit be with us, now and evermore. Amen.**