

feb 14

forgiving the unforgivable

"therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. but to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." luke 7:47

yes, forgiving the unforgivable. that's what Jesus did for us and that's what He wants us to do for others. i don't know how to really begin this message. i was watching something i probably really shouldn't have been watching and yet i discovered the depth of a truth i may have never been able to grasp otherwise.

it was a show about children in an orphan home and how they were mistreated and abused, all in the name of godly discipline, "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." prov 22:6 that scripture was prominently displayed above the whipping cane used for punishment. each lash and their number were carefully recorded: for crying, for wetting the bed, etc.

a sweet young girl came to work at the orphanage. she witnessed the constant abuse and harsh discipline and tried to help the children. she even went to the local parishioner and tried to tell him what was going on. he casually tossed aside her concerns assured they were good people trying to care for needy children.

so this is where the story wanders into territory we should all refrain from. all this apparently happened in the previous generation and now they were all ghosts

haunting the new inhabitants of the building. i won't go through all the story line but be assured it was intriguing enough to keep me watching.

anyway, the punch line comes down to this: the good won and the bad lost. the orphans who had been abused were being led out of their prison into the light of freedom. the young girl who had fought to save them was leading them all out and she came face to face with the evil abuser. (this is where i really lost it and began to cry like a baby.) she reached out and held the abuser's hand (the very one which had caused so much hurt and pain) and said, "come with us."

it was as if it was the very cry of Lord Jesus saying, "please come with us. come with us into the light." it was like my heart had become the heart of God and i felt the pain He felt at leaving any out of the light of His love. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." luke 23:34 Jesus felt the Father's heart as He uttered that from the cross.

the abuser hesitated for a moment as if he was wondering whether he dared have all his hidden darkness exposed to the light. was redemption even possible at this point? then he let go of her hand and stepped back. for a moment i could sense his wondering - "what would it be like?" but no, he had been too long in the realm of darkness. this was what he knew; all he had ever known.

at that moment i could feel the heart strings tugging at God's own heart; another one has been lost to the darkness. the hurt was so real. each one of His

creations is so precious in His sight and the pain that they have loved the darkness more than His beautiful, loving light is a pain too deep for any created being to understand.

i have often wondered if judas would be redeemable if he had sought repentance. that question has long been debated. i don't know what atrocities the thief on the cross might have committed to deserve such a punishment. i do know he had no time to make restitution for any of them. yet it only took a repentant heart crying out to fellow "criminal." surely he had heard before of the works of Jesus and that was enough for him to trust in His kingdom to come. what was the reply of our Lord? no, it wasn't go and sin no more. it was, "assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise." luke 23:43

"I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance." luke 15:7 is it no wonder that He rushed out to meet the prodigal son and threw him a feast? that is the greatest love indeed. it's a love He has for each one of us.

of course there is only one problem with the story i have told. repentance must be made now, here in this life. there will be no offer made again in the afterlife. "for you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears." heb 12:17 yes, there will be many tears shed by those who would not give up their lust for this life.

sin cannot inhabit God's holy presence. our wrongs have separated us from God, and our sins have made Him hide his face so that he doesn't hear. "o wretched man that i am! who will deliver me from this body of death?" rom 7:24 God's answer: i will pay the penalty for them. I will join them in their weakness and become a willing sacrifice so our fellowship can be restored.

"for i am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." rom 8:38

happy valentine's day to all my brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. we who know the Lord have known the greatest love that will ever be. May we all strive to give it as it has been given unto us.