

Theme: The Apostle's Creed - "The forgiveness of sins"

"Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love." - Micah 7:18

"for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." - Matthew 26:28

We need Jesus because we are sinners who need forgiveness. Nothing is beyond His forgiveness. We recognize that we don't stand on a foundation of our own works or efforts (which would never be enough), but by the work of Jesus on the cross. In His death and resurrection, we have the forgiveness of our sins once and for all, and we are accepted as righteous. He is not only just, but offers grace and forgiveness. No other god gives us the same kind of pardon.

We also sometimes forget that forgiveness of sins is given to other believers as well. That our church is not a place that's going to look like a perfect place with "better" people, because in saying this, we negate the need for Christ's work on the cross. We gather together because we recognize that we need justification that only comes from Him by faith, and that we are not only forgiven of the past, but are also gifted with righteousness that covers our future as well. Forgiveness of sins is not partial. It is not earned. It is not based on what we do. Forgiveness of sins comes by the grace of our Savior, who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Reflection

- Do you struggle to believe that God can fully and completely forgive your sins and take away your guilt? Why or why not?
- Is there a situation in your past that might be keeping you from experiencing the depth of the forgiveness of God?
- In what ways do you underestimate God's forgiveness of sin – whether for yourself or for others?
- In what areas of your life do you keep yourself in shackles by not letting God have control and accept His forgiveness?

Prayer requests

- Pray that we would be transformed by the Holy Spirit to walk freely in knowing the depth of God's love and forgiveness for us.
- Pray that our church would be a place where forgiveness is accepted and given to others.
- Pray that we would understand the price God paid to attain our freedom, and would continually give Him thanks and rest in His joy and hope.