

FORGIVENESS

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thirdspace.org.au



This is a transcript of the video at thirdspace.org.au/city/episode/forgiveness-0

One of the things that's gone missing in our culture recently, is forgiveness. My mum was able to forgive my dad in a way that I've never seen anyone forgive someone after a long-term period of hurt and trauma. My father had left my mum and for many years there was no contact between them, but when he was at the end of his life and he was ill and sick in hospital, my mum would visit him, week-in, week-out, even for years as he was in a locked ward suffering from dementia. She would bring food in to him. She would read to him. She would look after him.

And I particularly remember one time coming in and mum was cleaning up dad's mess, and I mean mess. She was just the kind of person that could forgive, and it wasn't because mum was better than other people. I'd have to say that. She didn't see herself as better than other people, but mum knew what it was for herself to be forgiven. She was a Christian and she understood what the Christian message was, that at the centre of it was Jesus, who not only forgave his friends when they did something wrong against him, but even forgave his enemies to the point where when he's being nailed to the cross, he says, "Father, forgive them" to God, "They don't know what they're doing." He even forgave the people who nailed him to the cross.

So for my mum, it didn't seem a huge step to then forgive my dad. He'd left her, he had abandoned her, and when he came back to ask for her forgiveness when his life wasn't in good shape, she could have just wiped him off and canceled him. But she didn't. She forgave him. And I think when we lose forgiveness at the centre of our culture, we lose something really important. I don't know about you, but we love to be forgiven by people, but to forgive others, it's a lot harder to do. But the Christian message says; actually, the centre, the heart of Christianity is this issue of forgiveness that Jesus showed. The Christian message is, that if you have been forgiven and if you realise how much you've been forgiven by God, you will in turn forgive others.

Who do you need to forgive today? And, who do you need to be forgiven by? These are big issues and they're the big issues of life that I think Christianity answers really, really well.

Maybe ask a Christian friend why they choose to forgive others?