

PSALMS OF HOPE

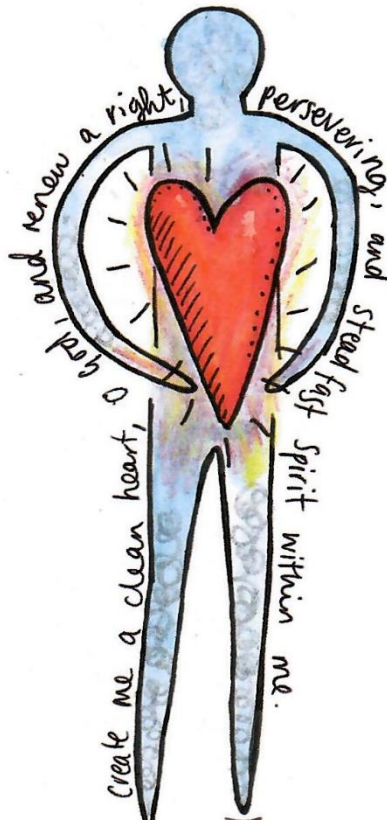
@UnitedChurchFerndown

United Church Ferndown's 2023 Lent Programme

Monday 13th March

Reflection #20

WHAT DOES SORRY REALLY MEAN?



Pray:

My Lord: thank you for the daily journey you are taking me on. Thank you that you and you alone guide my footsteps. You go before me, you are ever with me, your hands steer me and you always lead me on the right paths. As I commit each day to you, I know Lord that you will always direct me, inspire me, teach me and discipline me. How can I but praise you for this journey that you are taking me on, in the full knowledge that your loving arms are with me for the entirety of the adventure. By your strength Lord, help me today, and always, to give ALL praise glory and honour to your holy name. **Amen.**

Introduction:

A while back whilst doing looking after a team at holiday club, I asked the children to tell me different categories of how we can sin against God. As usual, they came up with physical examples: fighting and kicking; or words they have used: name-calling and gossiping. However, what surprised them was that we don't only sin by the deeds we do, or the words we say, but we also sin in our thoughts and what we fail to do (by omission). No one is perfect. We are all sinners (Romans 3:23) and we need to say 'sorry' and ask for forgiveness (1 John 1:9), but how do we do that?



Read:

Psalm 51:1-4,10-12 & 15 (NIV)

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.

²Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

³For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.

⁴Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;

so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge. ...

¹⁰Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

¹¹Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.

¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. ...

¹⁵Open my lips, LORD,
and my mouth will declare your praise.

Consider:

Do you have anything to say sorry for? If so, what is the best way you can do that so that it is sincere and meaningful; that it shows regret, some empathy; and also ask for forgiveness like in this psalm? Notice that it is not always easy to say sorry, but it is absolutely necessary. So, have hope that God is always here to help us to say 'sorry'!

Pray:

Lord, thank you that we can cry out to you anytime we need you. Let us be aware that no matter how imperfect we feel, how much others have put us down, even what we have done or have failed to do, you love us just the same. Thank you that will never forsake us if we come to you with a true and repenting heart. Help us to have complete trust in you.

Try it out:

Draw a large circle and divide it into quarters. In each quarter, put one of these words: Deeds, Words, Thoughts, Omission. Beside each word, write out what you have done that you may need to say sorry for. Now, can you say a heart-felt sorry to God and even to the person you may have hurt? Try it. God is here to help. How do you now feel for really saying 'sorry' in a meaningful way?