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Devotion for November 16th, 2021

"For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

- Jeremiah 31:34b

My son John, who is the parent of two of our Grace scholars, and I were talking about how Sirius XM has now relegated music from the '50s and '60s back into the higher numbered sections of its channel

selections. John, in his mid-thirties, was lamenting the change because it mirrors FM radio, which now considers songs from his childhood, the '90s and '00s decades, as classic rock. Further, both of us noted that these compilation stations tended to have such short playlists that you only got a compilation of "greatest" hits from that era.

Sadly, it's often the case that the same thing holds true for the Scriptures. It's true – ask someone to quote something from the Gospels and you will almost certainly get John 3:16, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."*

While that's nice, there is a lot more to that portion of the Bible, as Jesus taught about Baptism as well as the risks of unbelief within verses of this one.

Like those portions of Scripture, the passage set before us today is important but has the misfortune of immediately following Jeremiah's greatest hit section, the one where he foretells God's New Testament era. The verse above, our verse for today, completes that section but is rarely heard and that's a shame because what could be more comforting than God's promise to forgive our sin, indeed, to forgive it so completely that He will forget it forever?

That, dear friends in Christ, is incredible and it has great application no matter the station in life. For those engaged in the teaching ministry there is a lesson to be learned because far too often we are tempted, when dealing with scholars, to consider them based on the sins that we remember even though they have been confessed and forgiven. For them, each day is a fresh start with opportunities to do better.

Likewise, how would any of our relationships in life improve if only we would forget those things that the other person did wrong, if only they would forget the things that we have done wrong and move forward?

So much of Jesus' ministry was about God's people learning how to forgive one another. No doubt this was because He knew it could become difficult for us so to do. Always remember that the strength towards that forgiveness is found in the cross of Jesus. So come and lay your cares there, for His yoke is easy and His burden light. Praise be His Holy Name forever. Amen!

*God's blessings,
Rev. Kevin Loughran, Senior Pastor
Grace Lutheran Church & School*

