The Hill of Forgiveness

Dave Hearn, President of the C&MA Canada

A few weeks ago, Agnes and I were pilgrims on the El Camino (meaning “the way of Saint James”), in Spain.

On the second day of our pilgrimage, we climbed a long hill, “The Hill of Forgiveness.”

As I started the climb, I was confronted by the face of the man that sexually abused my youngest daughter early in our pastoral ministry.

I had forgiven on the surface, but deep in my soul, I was filled with focused rage. I have watched my daughter struggle hard emotionally, and our entire family has lived with the agony this person inflicted.

I heard God say, ‘I want you not only to forgive him, but also to bless him.’ I was reminded of the words of Jesus in Luke 6:27:

“I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you (ESV).”

In these verses, Jesus describes the final step in forgiveness. We have not totally forgiven until we can bless those who have hurt us deeply.

My first reaction to God’s invitation was to provide every reason that this person deserved anything but blessing.

I could feel the anger and tension growing as I took each step. Finally, I could resist the Holy Spirit no longer, and I cried out, “I do not want to carry this any longer; Lord, help me!”

The dam of anguish and anger began to drain, and I felt a deep release in my soul. I arrived at the summit of The Hill of Forgiveness feeling a new freedom.

My backpack was still heavy, but my soul was instantly lighter.

God specializes in being kind to unkind people and showing mercy to cruel people. He specializes in showering grace upon sinners. We can show His character by the way we treat our enemies.

What does forgiveness that blesses look like? For me, it was expressed in a simple prayer:

Lord, I am so angry at this person, but You already know that. I ask You to love this person through me, because I can’t do it in my own power. I ask you for a love I don’t have and can’t begin to produce.

Lord, I ask You to bless him with Your grace and love. I ask You to bring him to repentance and humility before You. I release him from my anger and place him in Your hands.

God will not turn you away when you come with an honest heart, admitting you need His love to flow through you. Through Jesus, we will find the strength to love our enemies, to bless those who curse us, and to pray for those who spitefully use us.

Have you climbed “the hill of forgiveness” recently? It’s time!

The Global Advance Fund (GAF) covers the costs of sending and supporting international workers (IWs) overseas—salaries, benefits, and the costs associated with ministry in various countries. Some is designated to strengthen the sending base, to train IWs.

Through the GAF, IWs take the Gospel to least-reached people groups, people who may never have heard the name Jesus.

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Global Advance Fund Update

Year-to-Date (as of April 2017):

- Income: $4,876,000
- Faith Goal: $5,107,000
- Excess/(Shortfall): $(231,000)

Month of April 2017:

- Income: $826,000
- Faith Goal: $1,195,000
- Excess/(Shortfall): $(369,000)

“Beloved, shall we open all our being to His heavenly power, and enter into all the fullness of the love of God? Let us receive him, and walk in him, and so walk in love”

(A.B. SIMPSON).
A Road of Forgiveness
Kristi Hopf, Desert Sand (Niger)

Kristi loves the Fulani and working with them. She most enjoys teaching to groups and individuals.

Last year, Kristi started Bible storying with Isaiah. He told Kristi about his concerns of how he is accountable before God for sin.

Recently, as Kristi and Isaiah spoke of how God provided a road of forgiveness through sacrifice, Isaiah asked if he needed to buy a sheep to sacrifice for his sins.

Though they were not yet in the New Testament, Kristi skipped ahead to talk with Isaiah about Jesus and how He became the sacrifice for our sins.

Isaiah is searching hard for answers to his questions and feeling the weight of his sin.

Please pray that Isaiah will continue to search, and that he will hear the truth of Jesus as he and Kristi continue through the Bible. Pray that Isaiah will find redemption for the sins of his soul that weigh upon him.

Receive your free monthly prayer calendar, Praise and Prayer, by mail or email: Sign up for On Mission Together at cmacan.org/subscribe

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Questions? We’d love to help you:
• (416) 674-7878 ext. 234
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Canadian Ministries

The Canadian Ministries Fund (CMF) supports ministry in Canada.

Most (70%) of the fund is used for district ministries such as church-planting and leader development.

15% is used to support ministry in Quebec and national multicultural ministries.

The balance is used to support the leader training ministries of Ambrose University and L’École de Théologie Évangélique du Québec (ETEQ).

New Ventures

New Ventures are emerging communities of faith who are listening and responding to what Jesus has called them to be and to become.

The C&MA has established New Ventures Teams that aim to facilitate a learning and growing environment. A total of 23 new churches and 49 New Ventures have started since July 1, 2012 (as of March 30, 2016).

We are on pace for a New Venture every three weeks in Eastern Canada!

newventurescanada.com

North York Central

North York is a dynamic and diverse area of Ontario, with people from all walks of life and with unique personal stories.

The vision of North York Central is to cultivate and grow a Christ-centred community that can faithfully connect with the people in the city and make God’s love known and felt.

North York Central believes that it all starts with growing deep, intimate relationships with God, and with allowing God’s grace to transform every aspect of our lives.

As a community, North York Central seeks God as they build relationships with one another and grow together through the teachings and application of God’s Word, prayer, and sharing in each other’s lives.

Canadian Ministries Fund Update

Year-to-date (April 2017)
• Income: $ 560,489
• Faith Goal: $ 663,674
• Excess/(Shortfall): ($ 107,870)

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