

## Luke's Gospel Series

'A Forgiven People'

3<sup>rd</sup> November 2019

Key Scripture: Luke 3:1-6 and Luke 19:1-10

### Summary:

The passage from Luke 3 tells us that John the Baptist came to prepare the way of the Lord's coming and that his message was a message of repentance and forgiveness. John was speaking to those who knew of God and that now was the time to turn from their disobedience towards God and return to Him. In the story of Zacchaeus, we see a man who was in need of God as he was stealing from his neighbours – fiddling their taxes to gain more – and was separated from the community. He is seen by Jesus and is invited to spend time with him. Through this encounter with Jesus, Zac realises he needs to change his ways and restore relationships.

Jesus' desire for us is that we are a people of Wholeness so that we speak of His goodness and glory. As we encounter God, through the Holy Spirit, he highlights areas in our lives where we need to know God's forgiveness and where we need to seek forgiveness from others. This is always a response to God's work in our lives.

True forgiveness involves RECOGNISING the issue, REPENTING towards God and any other person involved and RESTORING in relationship or in a practical way that is appropriate to the situation. Ephesians 4:32 reminds us that we are to be a Kingdom community people who are 'kind to and another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.'

### Questions:

1. How would you describe forgiveness?

**The following two questions are additional and we didn't specifically speak about this in the gathering** (There is more on this in my talk from Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2019)

2. There are two key Greek words for forgiveness, the first is *Charizomai* and brings out the idea of forgiveness being 'a gift'. This is the word used in Ephesians 4:32. How does this shape, or reshape, our understanding of forgiveness?
3. The idea of 'letting go' and 'cancelling debt' in forgiveness is brought out by the Greek word *aphiemi*. This is the word used in Matthew 6 (The Lord's Prayer). How does the definition of this word for forgiveness help us understand it in a new way?
4. Re-read the story of Zacchaeus. Can you identify the process of recognise, repent and restore. Are there other stories in the bible that speak into the questions of forgiveness
5. As we go deeper in our relationships with each other, can you share an area of life in which the process of recognise, repent and restore would be appropriate? (This can be a personal issue involving you and God or something that God has been speaking to you about with regards another person – remember that to keep this safe we need to maintain an environment of confidentiality)