

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost



The Lihu'e Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hawai'i

Ka Hale Pule 'O Na Lahui Apau . . .

Church Of All Peoples . . .

. . . Hele Pu Makou me Iesu Kristo

. . . Walking Together With Christ

September 13, 2020

The Lihu'e Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hawai'i

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Welcome to the Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost!

Introduction

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

Overview

New Perspective

Being a disciple requires an expansive perspective on forgiveness. Today our perspective is broadened by the good news that God's forgiveness is not based on our idea of fairness, but rather on abundant, unimaginable grace. God "does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities" (Ps. 103:10). The king forgives our entire debt, no matter how enormous it is (Matt. 18:23-27). We also are challenged to stretch our perspective and forgive each other. With Peter, we learn to stop keeping score (Matt. 18:21-22).

It's not an easy thing to do. Again and again we fall back on limited human understandings of what is "fair." Looking at the story of Joseph and his brothers, it's easy for us to say that his brothers really didn't deserve forgiveness. Even their plea for forgiveness is dishonest and manipulative—have they *really* repented (Gen. 50:15-17)? Joseph takes the wider view and realizes that it isn't his brothers' intentions that matter, but God's. God's forgiveness is much greater than what is fair, what we deserve.

So what does this new, broadened perspective look like in the lives of Christians and congregations? Paul provides a pragmatic glimpse: "Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them" (Rom. 14:3). If all are truly welcomed by God, we are called to share the good news of that welcome in all we say and do.

Announcements

1. Food distribution (LCC + LLC) – Saturday, October 3 @ 9am
2. #GrowthInGrace Gardening Team – sponsorships and volunteer team recruitment
3. Disaster preparedness task force, email jpaxton@ses.plts.edu
4. Minnesota plays Green Bay @ Minnesota today

Weekly Events

1. Virtual Youth Group
 - a. **Sunday, September 13**, 5:00-6:00pm, @ <https://zoom.us/j/92234312100>
2. College and Young Adults Ministry
 - a. **Tuesday, September 15**, 7:30-8:30pm, <https://zoom.us/j/98874414967>
 - b. **Tuesday, September 22**, 5:30-8:00pm – movie, dinner, and MULAN!!!
3. Women's Book Study – New Book
 - a. **Wednesday, September 16**, @ 7:30-8:30pm via zoom <https://zoom.us/j/92476163514>
4. Bible Study – “The Twelve,” **on break until September 24**, Micah 1-4
5. Centering Prayer with Liedeke Bulder
 - a. **Saturday, September 19**, @ 9-10am via zoom <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9079773456>
6. Maintenance (work) day
 - a. **Saturday, September 19** @ 8-11am

Prayer Concerns

Please remember these people in your prayers during the week: Judy Hoffman, Norman Dibble, Marie Johnson, Minora Higa, Kazue Zaima, Virginia Hines-Aflague, John Mattek, Girald II (Bobby Girald's son), Kristie Schmid (Tony's sister), Lolli Hagen, Abraham Torres, Sr., Kristy Kahananui, Sonny Koerte, Joan Duarte Ebesu, Mallory Rodriguez, Steve Schantz, Leonarda Cadiz, Peter Alisna, Lea Cadiz, Tirezah Pope, John McIntyre, Pastor Matthew Weber, Joyce Anglemyer, Stephen Shioi, Peggy Hood, Jason Shimono, Richard Rasay, Nancy Nelson (formely Mandell), Karen & Patrick Pavao, Edward Rasay, Richard Duarte (Friend of Kurt Javinar), Karen Richards (friend of Nancy Mandell), Marcos Larson (Liedeke's son), Dora Jane Rowell, Franklin Parraga, Penny Parraga, Leticia Ancog (Kurt Javinar's sister), Yvonne Shinseki, Al Dressler (Larry's Father), Shirley Hallman (Denese Alcott's Mother), Mercy Ballesteros, Mike LaBerge, Anna Marie & Phil Croghan, Judy Carlson, Caroline Johnson, Sheila Belarmino, Ray Roderick, The Church Council, and leaders in the ELCA. If you have additional prayer requests, please let the church office know. “*Ask it in my name . . .*” Mahalo for your love.

Remembering our Military

As we gather for worship, please remember those serving us in the military, and the families of our Hawai'i National Guard. These names have been given by loved ones and family members: Navy – TJ, Javinar, Kristian Matsumoto, Coast Guard - Brian Rodriguez, Navy - Kiana Alisna, Coast Guard - Ke'ale Renta Army - Jason Lumacad, Levi Fajardo: Air Force - Steven Javinar, Ikaika Fajardo, Army - Brandon Perkinson, Drew Cox, Tony Garton: National Guard - Benji MacKenzie, Eddie Resinto, Fred Casticimo, Philip Kamakea, Anthony Y. Torres, Master Sgt. If you know of someone you would like added to our prayer list, please advise the church office.

Biblical Forgiveness

As Christians we are actually not very good with the practice of forgiveness. It is not that we are *unforgiving*, though this may be true. In lived praxis, forgiveness is often mis-practiced and misapplied. Have a look at the end of our bulletin for more on forgiveness and proper guidelines surrounding forgiveness.

Welcome, Check-In, and Announcements

Type into the Facebook chatbox and respond to one, or more, of the following four check-in prompts

*Order for Confession and Forgiveness

P We are gathered in the name of the Father, Makua, and of the + Son, Keiki Kane, and of the Holy Spirit, Uhane Hemolele.

C Amen

P Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection

P Faithful God,

C have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. WE keep your gifts of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

P God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in the freedom and newness to do God's work in the world.

Gathering Song

ELW 377

Lift High the Cross

CRUCIFER

George W. Kitchin, 1887

Sydney H. Nicholson, 1916

Musical score for the hymn "Lift High the Cross" (Crucifer). The score is written in 4/4 time and consists of two systems of music. The first system contains the first line of the hymn: "Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro-claim, till". The second system contains the second line: "all the world a-dore his sa-cred name." The music is arranged for voice and piano accompaniment, with a treble clef for the voice line and a bass clef for the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Come, Christ - ian, fol - low where our Sav - ior trod, our
 Led on their way by this tri - um - phant sign, the
 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glor - ious tree, as
 Thy king - dom come, that earth's de - spair may cease be -
 For thy blest cross which doth for us a - tone, cre -

King vic - tor - ious, Christ, the Son of God.
 hosts of God in con - qu'ring ranks com - bine.
 thou hast prom - ised, draw us un - to thee.
 neath the shad - ow of its heal - ing peace.
 a - tion's prais - es rise be - fore thy throne.

***Apostolic Greeting**

P The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

C **And also with you.**

***Prayer of the Day**

P Let us pray. O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen**

***First Reading**

Genesis 50:15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Psalm (to be read responsively)

Psalm 103:1-13

Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy. (*Ps. 103:8*)

- ¹Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.
- ²**Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits**
- ³who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases;
- ⁴**who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**
- ⁵who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.
- ⁶**O Lord, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.**
- ⁷You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.
- ⁸**Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**
- ⁹you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.
- ¹⁰**You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**
- ¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.
- ¹²**As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**
- ¹³As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O Lord.

Second Reading

Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions.

²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the

Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

A The Word of the Lord C **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

Refrain



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, give thanks to the ris - en Lord;
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, give praise to his name.

**The Holy Gospel*

Matthew 18:21-25

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

P The Holy Gospel according to
Saint Matthew, the eighteenth
chapter.



Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had

happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.



Children's Sermon

Sermon

Song of the Day

ELW 608

Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling

1 Soft - ly and ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing for
 2 Why should we tar - ry when Je - sus is plead - ing, plead - ing for
 3 Oh, for the won - der - ful love he has prom - ised, prom - ised for

you and for me. See, on the por - tals he's wait - ing and watch - ing,
 you and for me? Why should we lin - ger and heed not his mer - cies,
 you and for me! Though we have sinned, he has mer - cy and par - don,

Refrain

watch - ing for you and for me.
 mer - cies for you and for me? “Come home, come home!
 par - don for you and for me. Come home, come home!

The image shows a musical score for two systems. The first system has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are "You who are wea-ry, come home." Ear - nest - ly, ten - der - ly,". The second system also has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The lyrics are "Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing, 'O sin - ner, come home!'". Both systems have a bass clef staff below the treble clef staff.

Text: Will L. Thompson, 1847–1909
 Music: THOMPSON, Will L. Thompson

**Apostles' Creed*

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

**Prayers of the Church*

P Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A You welcome us when we are weak in faith. Uphold your church throughout the world; make it a place of welcome. Strengthen faith through Bible studies and Sunday schools, confirmation classes and youth ministries. Nurture new ministries of education and growth (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A The heights of the heavens show us the vastness of your steadfast love. Have compassion on your creation. Where human selfishness has brought ruin and destruction, we look to you to heal, renew, and redeem your world. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Make your ways known to the nations. Speak kindness to our bitter grudges. Settle our hearts when we want to settle accounts with violence. Bless our leaders with patience and wisdom (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Bring healing and justice wherever harm is dealt. Provide vindication for all who are oppressed. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor; deliver all who

are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger, and guard refugees fleeing famine, poverty, and war. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Teach us to forgive. Remind us that you do not always accuse us. Still our tongues when we are tempted to pass judgment and argue over opinions. Make this congregation a community of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Lord, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A Be with our Ohana off island. As places around our nation re-open and re-close, be with them. Place hedges of protection around them as they go about their daily activities. Hold them in your love until they are able to come be with us again. God of our salvation,

C hear our prayer.

P All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord.

C Amen

Queen's Prayer

Piano



O kou a-lo-ha no A i-a i ka La-ni, A
No-lai-la e ka-Haku Ma-la-lo kou e-he-u, Ko

Pno



o kou oi-a i-o, He he-mo-le-le hoi
ma-kou ma-lu-hi-a, A mau loa a-ku no. A-me-ne.

English Translation

1. O Lord thy Loving Mercy,
Is high as the Heavens.
It tells us of thy truth.
And 'tis filled with holiness

3. For thy grace I beseech thee.
Bring us 'neath thy protection.
And peace will be thy portion
Now and forever more. Amen

Sharing of the Peace

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

P Let us share peace in the Facebook live chatbox with one another.

*Offering Prayer

P Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. You have set before us these gifts of your good creation. Prepare us for your heavenly banquet, nourish us with this rich food and drink, and send us forth to set tables in the midst of a suffering world, through the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

Offertory

As you are aware, these times are very difficult economically. What we, as a church, do not want to do is ask those who have little to give what little they have left. Instead, I humbly inquire, with much supplication, to those who have much in this season to grow in their giving to build and maintain the house of the Lord through this season. As we say here at LLC it's, "All for one, and one for all." Let's make it through this season together. For those who are able, there is a real opportunity for you to shine your light of faith and grow in your giving in this time. All glory be to God!

If, in this discernment, God puts it on your heart to give, donations can be made online, mailed in, or given on our website [here](#) or you can copy and paste the weblink below @

[https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-](https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?appver3=tYgT1GfNxRUldiimjHMvORYXmm3bazY6GfrmTtVDZydsksODEa-Up5lt373GHnco2evTpoomld6BrVzd2nGop8xSFKZ9u6c4AzLo4CjNx7k=&ver=3)

[bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?appver3=tYgT1GfNxRUldiimjHMvORYXmm3bazY6GfrmTtVDZydsksODEa-Up5lt373GHnco2evTpoomld6BrVzd2nGop8xSFKZ9u6c4AzLo4CjNx7k=&ver=3](https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?appver3=tYgT1GfNxRUldiimjHMvORYXmm3bazY6GfrmTtVDZydsksODEa-Up5lt373GHnco2evTpoomld6BrVzd2nGop8xSFKZ9u6c4AzLo4CjNx7k=&ver=3)

Offertory Song

Lord of Aloha

God of the is - lands, Lord of the seas, Ma - ker of beau - ty and source of the breeze,
5 King of Cre - a - tion, an - cient and new, Lord of A - lo - ha we wor - ship you.

9
 Auth-or of mer-cy, Giv-er of grace, Bles-sed Re-deem-er who died in our place, Fath-er of one O
 14
 ha-na are you, Lift-ing our voic-es we sing "Al-le-lu" Lord of A-lo-ha we wor-ship you.
 19
 God of the is-lands, Lord of the seas, Ma-ker of beau-ty and source of the breeze,
 23
 King of Cre-a-tion, an-cient and new, Lord of A-lo-ha we wor-ship you.
 27
 Lord of A-lo-ha we wor-ship you.

Sacramental Remembrance of Communion

**Lord's Prayer* (spoken in unison)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

**Blessing*

P Mothering God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life.

C Amen

Sending Song

ELW 661

I Love to Tell the Story

1 I love to tell the sto - ry of un - seen things a - bove,
 2 I love to tell the sto - ry: how pleas - ant to re - peat
 3 I love to tell the sto - ry, for those who know it best

of Je - sus and his glo - ry, of Je - sus and his love.
 what seems, each time I tell it, more won - der - ful - ly sweet!
 seem hun - ger - ing and thirst - ing to hear it like the rest.

I love to tell the sto - ry, be - cause I know it's true;
 I love to tell the sto - ry, for some have nev - er heard
 And when, in scenes of glo - ry, I sing the new, new song,

it sat - is - fies my long - ings as noth - ing else would do.
 the mes - sage of sal - va - tion from God's own ho - ly word.
 I'll sing the old, old sto - ry that I have loved so long.

Refrain

I love to tell the sto - ry; 'twill be my theme in glo - ry

to tell the old, old sto - ry of Je - sus and his love.

Text: Katherine Hankey, 1834-1911
 Music: HANKEY, William E. Fischer, 1849-1936

Dismissal

A Go in peace! Remember the poor!

C **Thanks be to God**

Upcoming Commemorations

John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, died 407

Sunday, September 13, 2020

John was a priest in Antioch and an outstanding preacher. His eloquence earned him the nickname "Chrysostom" ("golden mouth"). Appointed bishop of Constantinople, seat of the empire, he criticized corruption in the court. As a result, he was exiled by the empress.

Holy Cross Day

Monday, September 14, 2020

Helena, mother of Constantine, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and found what may be the actual site of Jesus' crucifixion. Her son built two churches there, and the dedication of one of them gave rise to this celebration of our Lord's victory on the cross.

Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, martyr, died around 258

Wednesday, September 16, 2020

Cyprian served as a bishop during a time of great persecution of Christians. He insisted on receiving back those who had left the faith under duress. He also provided medical care during a severe epidemic.

Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, died 1179

Thursday, September 17, 2020

A mystic who was widely influential within the church, Hildegard advised and reproved kings and popes, wrote poems and hymns, and produced treatises in medicine, theology, and natural history. She was also a musician and artist.

Dag Hammarskjöld, renewer of society, died 1961

Friday, September 18, 2020

A Swedish diplomat, Hammarskjöld served as the second Secretary General of the United Nations until his death in a plane crash while trying to negotiate peace in present-day Zambia. His journal, published as *Markings*, revealed the depth of his Christian faith.

BIBLICAL FORGIVENESS

I take real issue with forgiveness in our contemporary cultural. There is a real and dangerous way that Christians, and the world, out of a lack of understanding of *what* forgiveness is and how it's supposed to work, offer cheap grace (Bonhoeffer, 1995, p. 44-45) *not forgiveness*.

Bonhoeffer says this about cheap grace,

“Cheap grace is not the kind of forgiveness of sin that frees us from the toils of sin. Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves. Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness **without requiring repentance**. . . Communion without confession. . . [It] is grace **without** discipleship, grace **without** the cross, grace **without** Jesus Christ, living and incarnate. . . [W]hat has cost God much cannot be cheap to us.”

Believe it or not there is a significant difference between *letting it go* and the process of forgiveness. Forgiveness *is* a process. It requires the following to be done by the offending party:

1. Acknowledgement and awareness of the harm done
2. Authentic grief and remorse for the harm done
3. Accountability that includes ownership and responsibility for the harm done
4. Amends are made to right the wrong

If a person does not come to you, confess their sin – by naming and identifying what they did and how it affected you, offer penitence and authentic sorrow, take ownership for what they have done, and offer reparations, *you are not obligated to forgive them!* Forgiveness is an act completed by **both parties**.

We need to be clear about this because of cases of abuse. Repentance means *they stop abusing you!* Repentance means *they stop doing whatever is hurting you*.

In our culture, I am convinced, based upon what I see, that most people proffer the cheap grace of political politeness. They don't want to make a big deal. They're afraid of things getting worse by calling sin what it is: SIN. And, most people don't have the power or position to actually hold offenders (often times people in power or positions of authority) accountable without receive backlash or retribution. There are real social and political conundrums that inhibit forgiveness. Because of power and authority, “letting it go” becomes the least costly option for victims of sin. But let's be clear, letting it go IS NOT FORGIVENESS!