



WEEKLY STUDY

Week 7

Pastor Gary wrapped up our Summer series on the Apostles' Creed. He taught about our belief in the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection. You might be surprised to learn of the connection between forgiveness and resurrection. The forgiveness of our sins makes it possible for us to have new life in Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus points to a future resurrection for us and to new life today. As you study and pray, stay alert for the ways the resurrection of Jesus is changing your life today.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture, follow the daily prayer prompt, and then pray this or your own prayer.

O God, my Almighty Father, I believe in you. I believe in you, Jesus. I believe you are God's only son. I believe you were conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. I believe you suffered, were crucified, dead, and were buried. I believe you descended to the dead and rose again on the third day. I believe you ascended into heaven and are seated at the Father's right hand. I believe you will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in you, Holy Spirit. And in the Holy Catholic Church. I believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Lord, I believe; help my unbelief. Amen.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: 1 JOHN 1.8-9

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

- Pastor Gary said, "The realization of my imperfection heightens my awareness of my need to be forgiven and also my forgiveness." Honesty and humility are key elements in receiving the forgiveness offered through Jesus Christ. A lack of facing our own brokenness can hold us back from freedom and new life. Do you ever find it difficult to see your own sin? Who helps you identify your need for forgiveness?

- *O God, I confess my need for your forgiveness. Reveal to me the ways I deceive myself and bring me back to life.*

TUESDAY: LUKE 6.37-38

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

- *Forgive, and you will be forgiven.* This teaching of Jesus seems so simple, and yet is one of the most difficult to live out. It may sound like God is withholding forgiveness from us until we forgive everyone else. The truth is, we can not receive the forgiveness *already* offered to us while we are still holding on to the wrongdoings of others. A closed hand can not receive something new.
- *Jesus, give me a heart like yours. Help me to forgive others as you have forgiven me.*

WEDNESDAY: EPHESIANS 4.31-32, MATTHEW 6.14

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

- Where do you see bitterness, rage, anger, brawling, slander, and malice in the world around you? Where do you see kindness, compassion and forgiveness? Where do your heart and mind most often reside? In which of these two worlds do you spend the most time? We can easily get drawn into the world of division and bunker down in our own *rightness*, but to live in the forgiveness of God, we have to be willing to lay that life down.
- *Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, I repent of my own distraction by the strange allure of bitterness and brawling. Cleanse me and make me whole.*

THURSDAY: 1 CORINTHIANS 15.20-23

Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.²² For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.²³ But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

- Paul is pointing out the beautiful symmetry and power of Jesus’ resurrection. Death entered the picture as a result of Adam’s choices to live apart from God’s design for his life. God still made a way for us to live—even beyond that death. What does it mean to be in Christ and to belong to him?
- *Thank you Jesus for showing us the way to life in you. Resurrect in me today!*

FRIDAY: JOHN 11.24-27

Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

²⁵ *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?”*

²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she replied, “I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

- Belief that Jesus is Lord sets the path to resurrection. It was true for Martha in the death of Lazarus, and it is true for us. As Pastor Gary asked repeatedly—Do You Believe?
- *Jesus, I believe that you are the Son of God. In you I place my trust. My hope is made new in you!*

SATURDAY: ROMANS 6.3-11

Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

⁵ *For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.* ⁶ *For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—⁷ because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.*

⁸ *Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.* ⁹ *For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.* ¹⁰ *The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.*

¹¹ *In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

- It can be difficult to understand the resurrection of Jesus and how it means we are also able to be raised from the dead. Paul lays out the path from baptism (baptized into Jesus' death) to resurrection (raised to life). Because we can see our humanity reflected in Jesus, we can connect with the miracle of forgiveness and new life for ourselves. Can you imagine the stone rolled away from the dead places in your life today?
- *God, roll the stone away and let me follow Jesus into a new life.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Psalm 32.1-7

*Blessed is the one
whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.*

*² Blessed is the one
whose sin the Lord does not count against them
and in whose spirit is no deceit.*

*³ When I kept silent,
my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.*

*⁴ For day and night
your hand was heavy on me;
my strength was sapped
as in the heat of summer.*

*⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you
and did not cover up my iniquity.
I said, "I will confess
my transgressions to the Lord."
And you forgave
the guilt of my sin.*

*⁶ Therefore let all the faithful pray to you
while you may be found;
surely the rising of the mighty waters
will not reach them.*

*⁷ You are my hiding place;
you will protect me from trouble
and surround me with songs of deliverance.*

- How do these words speak to the idea of forgiveness?
- What is your role in forgiveness?
- How do you picture the hiding place mentioned in verse 7?