

Thought for the Week

Being in debt is frightening. Everyone wants to be fair and square. No-one likes the idea that because you can't repay a loan, you might be in danger of a visit from the bailiff. This – and worse – is the scenario in today's Gospel reading. Jesus makes up a story of a servant who owes his master an enormous amount of money and is in danger of losing everything because he can't repay it. Out of compassion, the master cancels the debt completely.



In his letter to the Romans, Paul tells us 'owe no-one anything except to love'. He believes we all owe a debt of love to each other. Why? Well, this is what it means to be human as God intended. Yet all of us fall short of love. That's why God comes to us in Jesus. That's why Jesus died on the Cross – so that our sin may be forgiven. So that our debt may be cancelled. Now that we are no longer burdened by it, we are free to forgive others.

In Jesus' story, this is what the servant doesn't do. When he finds another servant owes him a small sum, he refuses to cancel his debt. He refuses to forgive. Therefore God cannot forgive him. He has put himself in the centre of his world; his grudge against his debtor takes up so much space, there is no room for the mercy of God.

If you were in terrible debt, and unable to pay, imagine the relief you would feel if your creditor simply let you off! This is what God has done for us in Christ. This is what we may therefore do for others when they hurt us. It isn't that the hurt doesn't matter. But if we leave it at the Cross we are free to let it go.

'Forgive us our sins as we forgive....'

Anne Samuels