# EASTRIDGE Communicator

Monthly Newsletter of Eastridge Baptist Church

"...you could build

hospitals all over the

world and treat people

for free, spend your

weekends taking

orphans to Disneyland,

discover the cure for

every form of cancer and

give all of the proceeds

to feed hungry children

around the globe and

that will not unlatch the

#### A Few Good Questions

from the desk of Pastor John

Are you a good person? Anyone who has had their finger on the pulse of Christian evangelism during the last 15 years knows that question is intended to open the door for the gospel. The reason is because the average person will answer that they are a good

person. The reason is because when asked about being good, people most often compare themselves to those who they consider to be "worse" than themselves and rarely compare themselves to God's standard of goodness or righteousness.

gates of heaven to you." Are you good enough to go to heaven? Again, most people will either answer that they are good enough or hope they are good enough. Interestingly, most people assume that if God had a giant scale and their good deeds were placed on one side of the

scale and their bad deeds were placed on the other side, their good deeds would tip the scales in their favor. They think that because they believe their good deeds are better than they really are, and their bad deeds are not as bad as they really are. They have a skewed view of both their righteousness and their wickedness. They have an exaggerated view of their righteousness

> and a diminished view of their unrighteousness. They don't truly understand the seriousness of their situation. They are like the man whose throat has been cut and who thinks a Hall's lozenge will make him feel better.

How does one get to heaven? Most people would like to believe

it is by being good or at least having done something good at some point. But what people must be told is that without a relationship with Jesus Christ no one is good. Romans 3:10-23 makes it clear

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that there is none righteous, not even one! Isaiah 64:6 says, "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away." In other words, you could build hospitals all over the world and treat people for free, spend your weekends taking orphans to Disneyland, discover the cure for every form of cancer and give all of the proceeds to feed hungry children around the globe

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and that will not unlatch the gates of heaven to you. Salvation is not a result of our works—it is a result of God's grace.

How come salvation is not by works? The answer is simple: salvation is by grace and not works because

God loves us so much. Our sin is much worse than we care to admit. We are sinners by birth and by choice and sin is so defiling that without the cleansing power of Jesus' blood and the transforming work of God we would remain dead in our sin (Eph. 2:1, 5). A spiritually dead person is incapable of doing anything righteous. But most importantly, salvation is not the result of our works so that man cannot brag

and God gets the glory. Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For

by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, so that no one may

**boast."** To include man's works as a part of his salvation is also to rob God of His glory. If man can do something to earn salvation then he can also take some of the credit and thus some glory.

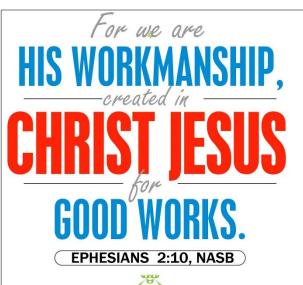
Why would God save us at all? He saves us because

He loves us (John 3:16; 15:13). He saves us because it glorifies Himself (Eph. 1:9-14). And in an interesting twist, God saved us *for good works*. While good works cannot save us and actually do not happen before we are saved, God saved us and prepared us to do good works and He prepared good works for us to do. Ephesians 2:10 says, **"For we are His work-**

manship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

What shall I do now? First things first. If you are not trusting in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ you must start there. You must confess your sin to God and ask Him to forgive your sin and save your soul

through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Next, you must seek to honor God by doing what He has commanded in His Word. You should be studying your Bible for the purpose of knowing God and obeying His commands. And third, you should be telling others that Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven (John 14:6). You can start by asking them, "Are you a good person?"



### Family News

Eastridge is excited to welcome the following person into church membership:

Noah Ressler

For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Romans 12:4-5



## Bags of Hope 2020

by Ken Lilly (Missions elder at Eastridge)

What a crazy year this has been! With all that has gone on with the COVID-19 pandemic, I had been wondering if it would be wise to once again reach out

to the people in the slums of Yangon, Myanmar (aka Rangoon, Burma) for what would be the eighth year of the Bags of Hope ministry. When a local pastor named Daniel first took Diana and me to see one of the slum areas in Yangon in 2013, we were appalled to see the living



Pastor Daniel (wearing "Truth" t-shirt) praying with local believers in one of the slums.

conditions of these dear people whom God loves just as much as He loves us. When we saw the dedication of Daniel and his great care and desire to reach these needy people with the gospel, the idea of taking bags of rice and gift bags to the children of these people

lost in the darkness of Buddhism began to take hold.

I prayed about the prospect of going forward with Bags of Hope this year in light of the obvious risks from the pandemic and the likelihood that many folks are hurting financially. I wasn't sure it would be wise to proceed. Then, I received an e-mail from Daniel saying that the virus was spread-

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Pastor Daniel with the children of the slums of Yangon.

ing in Myanmar and, while their numbers aren't anything like the U.S., they have lost 133 people to the virus. Despite that, Daniel said that while the government is not allowing him to hold services in the church he pastors located adjacent to one of the many slum areas, he is able to visit people in the slums. When I e-mailed back with my concerns for Bags of Hope this year he responded with:

"I think it is good and wise to go ahead with Bags of Hope in even this year because I hope the virus will be calm down to the situation of Bags of Hope could be distributed. And, then, people will have more hope and joy for it because people are facing more difficulty and hard time to live and get their daily food in this year than last years.

And, also, I would have more opportunity to share the gospel and Christmas message to the people for the cause of the pandemic. There might be People may accept the gospel message more than last years be-

cause the experience of the

pandemic and hard times."

The theme for Bags of Hope is based on Matthew 12:21, "In His name the nations will put their Hope." We are not sure why God has allowed the pandemic, but we have a sure hope in knowing that He is sover-

eign, in control, and will continue to grow His Church as we are faithful to share His love and wonderful gospel message with "the least of these."

Would you please prayerfully consider contributing above your normal tithes and offerings to the Bags of Hope outreach? You can contribute via your Realm account (Giving), through

our website at eastridgebaptist.org/give, or by placing a check or cash in the offering box. Please write "Myanmar BOH" in the memo of your check or on the giving envelope if you give cash.

Thanks! And please pray for Daniel and other local leaders as they distribute to the slum areas; pray that God would continue to change hearts as they share the good news!

## A Curious Story of the Church, Part 2 by Derek Iverson

In part 1 of this article (last month's newsletter), we met David Watters and learned of his relationship with the Kham tribal people of Nepal and his work in translating the Bible into their native language. In part 2, the translation efforts move forward while opposition to the Khan Christians begins.

In 1973, David and Nancy Watters went back to the States from Nepal as Nancy was suffering complications from Hepatitis B. While dealing with these medical issues, David received a letter from Hasta Ram reporting on what was happening in Taka-Shera. Hasta had been reading to the people from the Scripture portions that he was translating, but found only total apathy and no gospel interest. He was discouraged and decided that he would instead go to the hillside daily to pray to God. By 1974 there was still no response to the translated Bible portions, and Watters

was thinking things were hopeless and that maybe he shouldn't return to Taka-Shera. He and Nancy carried a tremendous burden of failure and discouragement, and little love in their hearts for the obstinate Kham people. They were led to pray and confess and give the burdens they were carrying to God. God granted them forgiveness and great relief and their faith was renewed. Before the end of the year they were back in Nepal and by late 1975 they had trial versions of Mark, 1 Peter, Genesis, and Exodus for review.

Then in early 1976, Hasta Ram and three other men came to Watters and wanted to be baptized, but they were puzzled. "How does one lay hold of God's salvation?" David explained the gospel in detail and warned that if they believed they were liable to be

persecuted in their country. He asked, "Are you willing to suffer imprisonment for your faith?" They all said yes since "This is what we've been looking for all our lives." Watters explained the Christian traditions on baptism and they decided to be baptized. So, in a mountain stream at Taka-Shera the Kham church was born. The next night the four men brought their wives, then friends. Quickly their numbers swelled to 50 and many more came, all desperate to hear the gospel and learn of God. The church gathered at Hasta Ram's

house and it continued to grow.

But then the Nepali government canceled the SIL (Wycliffe) contract and ordered all SIL representatives to leave the country. Hasta was only able to get a passport to Britain, granted because of his Ghurka service; the Watters family decided to go there with him to continue the translation work. Watters prepared the manuscripts necessary to publish Genesis, Exodus, the Parables of Jesus, Romans, Philippians, and Colossians. Meanwhile, the church in Taka-Shera prospered; the elders there found that God was still present with them even with Watters and Hasta removed.



David Watters and Hasta Ram

The following year, Hasta returned to Nepal from Britain but the Watters family was stuck in the Philippines. David continued his translation work and was able to arrange printing the first books of the Kham Bible in 1979—10 years after the start of his effort! Meanwhile the opposition to the Kham Christians was mounting. Nepal had laws that mandated a one-year prison sentence for anyone who converted from Hinduism, and a six-year prison sentence for anyone who proselytized for another faith. When local hooligans couldn't get the Christians to pay them bribes, they filed complaints against Christian converts. In 1980, seven elders from the church were arrested and marched off to prison in Musikot, chained together

## A Curious Story of the Church, Part 2 continued from page 4

like criminals. They were told they would be released if they would sign a statement that they were really Hindus. The officials said they didn't really have to be Hindus, they just needed to sign the statement saying they were. The men refused, James Singh testifying, "We have committed no crimes. We are simply walking in the way of our

Lord Jesus....We have to follow the King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

The prisoners, who were chained together with nine common criminals in a dark gloomy cell, began talking of their surroundings as "the house of God" and their chains as "ornaments of God."

These were unschooled, unlettered men, new believers from the most unlikely of places.

In next month's article, find out about the intensified persecution of the Kham church.

## Cell Phones and the Gospel By Cathy Mickelson



I recently received a newsletter from the JESUS Film Project. As I read one of the articles, excitement welled up in me.

"Staff sent 29 used, donated cell phones to Francophone Africa and Ethiopia. Each phone was loaded with "JESUS," pre-evangelism short films, and the follow-up series "Walking With Jesus," in up to 10 languages, as well as the Jesus Film app. Staff and volunteers used them to meet with seekers, mostly who had watched "JESUS" on TV and responded. Of the 8,000 people they met with using the phones, we saw 4,000 people pray to accept Christ over three months... We're currently working with a ministry

partner to spread the gospel through peer-to-peer phone sharing, using the donated phones. There will be no need for the internet in isolated places. This could be huge, truly a disciple-multiplying model in these closed, restricted countries, like when Jesus fed the 5,000. I hope that hundreds of friends of "JESUS" will send in their used phones or iPads. We're ready and excited!" – Marc Vergo, Jesus Film Project

The Eastridge elders have approved collecting used cell phones and iPads to donate to this project. While people are having to keep their distance from one another during this challenging time in our world, you can help them experience the power of "JESUS" and other films online and on any mobile device or smartphone anywhere in the world. Phones and iPads must have all personal information removed from them before donating. With Christmas around the corner, someone in your family may be getting a new device. Encourage them to donate their old device to promote the gospel around the world. You may give your used devices to Bill or Cathy Mickelson to be donated. They can be contacted at mickelsons5@msn.com or camickelson@msn.com. This will be an ongoing project.

## Look Where Isaiah Points from the desk of Pastor Paul

Where do you find comfort when you are distressed? We grasp for reassurance that everything will be ok when we face hardships. Ask yourself, are my thoughts drawn to consider God when I am distressed? It has been said, "what comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us" (Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, 1). How we think about God and what we perceive Him to be like reveals much about us. It shapes how we live, think, and even speak. It even frames how we respond to unpleasant situations.

Isaiah points us to a view of the all-powerful God that can help us fix our hope in the right place.

The Old Testament is no stranger to showing God's people where to look in times of trouble. The first 39 chapters of Isaiah describe the wickedness of the people and the coming judgement of the Lord as warned in

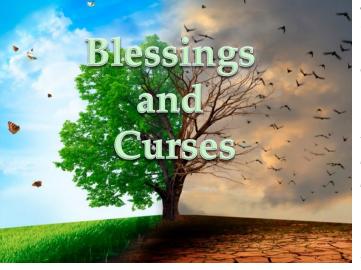
Deuteronomy 28:15–68. The message of coming judgment, destruction, and captivity because of their covenant violation is clear. In this context of warnings, Isaiah shifts in chapter 40 to declare the comfort that comes from God. Isaiah 40–48 looks forward to the hope that is coming after the judgement. Has God cast off His people? The clear answer is no. God promised that He would restore them.

Isaiah 40:1–11 begins with the call to comfort God's people. These verses answer the question, Does God want to deliver His people? The resounding answer is yes. Verses 12–26 answer the question, Is God able to deliver His people? Isaiah makes it abundantly clear that the Lord is more

than able to do so. The people were to see where Isaiah was pointing as the source of comfort and deliverance. Isaiah is directing the people to set their focus on God. Their comfort during the unpleasant situation of captivity was to come as they trusted in and waited on the Almighty Lord.

A right understanding of God makes a tremendous difference in how the chaos of the world and our lives is handled. Isaiah 40:12 gives a marvelous glimpse of the incomparable power of God. "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in

a balance?" Isaiah stirs his readers to consider God as the all-powerful Creator. The rhetorical question had a clear answer. It is only the Sovereign Lord that has done these things. There is none like Him. Their comfort is to rest in the One who is mightier than any human ruler or nation.



Think about the weightiness of what is ascribed to God. Imagine all the seas and oceans of the earth. They are vast and powerful, and at times very dangerous. Yet, they are all within God's grasp. What appears beyond our control is nothing to the Lord. Don't forget this is the One who can calm the raging seas by His word (see Mark 4:35–41). Consider how big the universe is. God is so mighty that the expanse of space is like nothing to Him. He can measure it easily as though it fit from the tip of the pinky finger to the end of the thumb. It is estimated that Earth is just over 92 million miles away from the sun (source: nasa.gov). To us, that is an extraordinary distance. But to God, it is tiny. In fact, God's power is seen in the fact that He formed

## Look Where Isaiah Points continued from page 6

the earth and holds it together (Gen. 1). Psalm 102:25, "Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your

**hands."** Mountains are not foreign to us in this part of the country. We are easily amazed at their size. Yet, it is God Almighty who made them. The largest of

mountains, estimated to weigh in the trillions of pounds, are easily weighed and balanced by Him. God is the majestic Creator who has placed everything exactly where He wants it to be. The universe func-

tions exactly how He intends it to.

Isaiah's question is to draw the reader to the conclusion that there is no one like God. He is grand, immeasurable, and powerful. The whole universe was created and established according to His plan. He has no equal. Therefore, He has the power to do all that He pleases, including rescuing and restoring His

people. Can God save His people? Absolutely! There is no one on earth or even among the spiritual enemy that can stop Him.

This was meant to bring enormous comfort to those in the peril of captivity. And it should bring abundant comfort to us as we walk through this life. A better understanding of God will help us in our daily lives. Many things compete for our attention. They

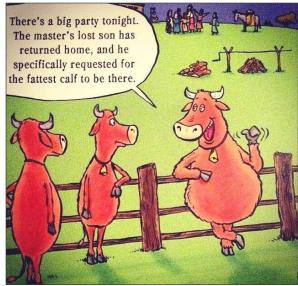
want us to view the world through their lens. They want us to fret over the hardships. The winds of life can easily shake us when our focus is not set firmly on God. However, our gaze must be fixed upon the infinite Creator who holds all

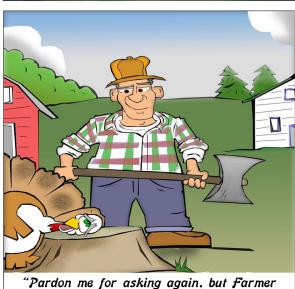
things together. If He can make this vast universe, then He is able to care for us. Let us trust in the Lord through all seasons of life. As Isaiah points to God as the source of comfort, let us also encourage one another to fix our minds upon the God who made the universe. His inexhaustible power is greater than anything else in all of creation.



Join us for an evening of music and Scripture reading focused on the hope we have in Christ and the peace we find with God.

#### **Just for Laughs**





Brown are you a licensed chiropractor?"



Psalm 100:4-5
Enter his gates with
thanksgiving and his courts with
praise; give thanks to him and
praise his name. For the Lord is
good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues
through all generations.

1 Thess. 5:16-18
Rejoice always, pray continually, give **thanks** in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Psalm 69:30 I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving.

#### Colossians 2:6-7

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

#### **November Birthdays & Anniversaries**

Chris Freeman 11/1
Sarah McCafferty 11/2
Luke Barker 11/2
Aaron Swenson 11/3
John LeProhon 11/5
Janette Carter 11/5
Bobbie Stockton 11/6
Peter Schrock 11/6
Diane Scholl 11/6
Elise Young 11/6
Judy Peltekian 11/7

Cy Latta 11/7
Timothy Kearney 11/7
Sage Small 11/8
Jannelle Noller 11/8
Sam Groot 11/9
Owen Cummings 11/10
Dawna Yarnold 11/13
Liam Wynne 11/13
Ellie Teeler 11/14
Joanne Thomas 11/16
Josh Peyton 11/17

Ryle Latta 11/17
Jackie Cochran 11/18
Roy Yeomans 11/19
Skyler Sundvall 11/19
Samantha Goheen 11/22
Jefferson Goheen 11/22
Don Allen 11/25
Grayson Young 11/25
Mike Osterman 11/26
Bob Cochran 11/26
Shay Anderson 11/26

Pattie Kremnetz 11/27
Maxine Emme 11/27
Caroline Lege 11/27
Jacob Trzeciak 11/30

#### <u>Anniversaries</u>

Chris and Lynnette
Morales 11/16
Clement and Ai-Lin Eng
11/22
Paul and Carol Buehler
11/23

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8:30am & 10:30am Worship Services 10:30 Adult Sunday School <b>6:00pm Prayer</b> <b>Meeting</b>	2:00–3:00pm Ladies' Bible Study 6:30–8:00pm Ladies' Bible Study	5:00pm–8:30pm Taekwondo 7:00pm Young Marrieds' Bible Study 7:00pm Ladies' Bible Study	6:30–8:00pm Adventure Club 6:30–7:30pm Adult Bible Study 6:30pm Youth Group	10:00–11:30am Ladies' Bible Study 5:00–6:30 Bible Quizzing Practice 7:00pm College/ Career Bible Study	8:00am Men's Bible Study	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
8:30am & 10:30am Worship Services 10:30 Adult Sunday School	2:00–3:00pm Ladies' Bible Study 6:30–8:00pm Ladies' Bible Study	10:30am Missions Prayer Meeting 5:00pm–8:30pm Taekwondo 6:30pm Elder Mtg 7:00pm Young Marrieds' Bible Study 7:00pm Ladies' Bible Study	6:30–8:00pm Adventure Club 6:30–7:30pm Adult Bible Study 6:30pm Youth Group	10:00–11:30am Ladies' Bible Study 5:00–6:30 Bible Quizzing Practice 7:00pm College/ Career Bible Study	8:00am Men's Bible Study	
15	16	<b>17</b>	18	19	20	21
8:30am & 10:30am Worship Services 10:30 Adult Sunday School	2:00-4:30pm Shoebox Collection 2:00-3:00pm Ladies' Bible Study 6:30-8:00pm Ladies' Bible Study	2:00–4:30pm Shoebox Collection 5:00–8:30pm Taekwondo 7:00pm Young Marrieds' Study 7:00pm Ladies' Bible Study	2:00-4:30pm Shoebox Collection 6:30-8:00pm Adventure Club 6:30-7:30pm Adult Bible Study 6:30pm Youth Group	2:00–4:30pm Shoebox Collection 10:00–11:30am Ladies' Bible Study 5:00–6:30 Bible Quizzing Practice 7:00pm College/ Career Bible Study	8:00am Men's Bible Study <b>4:00–7:00pm</b> Shoebox Collection	9:00am-1:00pm Shoebox Collection 6:30-8:00pm Night of Hope Concert @ EBC
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
1:30-5:00pm Shoebox Collection Deadline for OCC Shoeboxes 8:30am & 10:30am Worship Services (Baptisms) 10:30 Adult Sunday School	9:00am-12:00pm Shoebox Collection 2:00-3:00pm Ladies' Bible Study 6:30-8:00pm Ladies' Bible Study			Thanksgiving Day  ANK FURTHER STATES OF THE SECOND		
29	30		4 🌭			
Communion 8:30am & 10:30am Worship Services 10:30am Adult Sunday School (Large Portable)	2:00–3:00pm Ladies' Bible Study 6:30–8:00pm Ladies' Bible Study			No	vevila	er

Please reserve seats for the Sunday services through your Realm account (events) or our website at eastridgebaptist.org/registration

### **December 2020**

Saturday, December 5	Ladies' Brunch	10:00am-1:00pm @ EBC
Sunday, December 6	Monthly Prayer Meeting	6:00pm (Auditorium)
Tuesday, December 8	Missions Prayer Ministry	10:30am @ Alaire Irish's
Sunday, December 13	Special Christmas Music	Both services
Thursday, December 24	Christmas Eve Service	6:00pm

## January 2021

Sunday, January 3	Monthly Prayer Meeting	6:00pm (Auditorium)
Tuesday, January 12	Missions Prayer Ministry	10:30am @ Alaire Irish's

## February 2021

Tuesday, February 9 Missions Prayer Ministry 10:30am @ Alaire Irish's	Sunday, February 7	Monthly Prayer Meeting	6:00pm (Auditorium)
	Tuesday, February 9	Missions Prayer Ministry	10:30am @ Alaire Irish's



## The Necessity of Forgiveness from the desk of Pastor Ryan

It has been said that we are never more like God than when we forgive. The reverse would mean that we are never more unlike God than when we refuse to forgive. This month I thought it important to focus on forgiveness as we continue learning the basics of biblical counseling: the fundamentals, and the necessary components. We've talked about the goal and the focus of biblical counseling; and the necessity of repentance and faith, and of killing sin. Last month's emphasis was on the necessity of hope.

As the apostle Paul writes to Timothy, he says, "...people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud,

arrogant, abusive" (2 Tim 3:2), and commit a host of other sins. He then goes on to tell Timothy that sinners will go from bad to worse (3:13). This is a serious list of sins, and every person on the planet is affected by this list in one way or another. Either we commit these sins, or these sins are committed against us. This means that whether we are the offender or the offended, we must be good at forgiveness. When we sin, the Bible calls us to humble our-

selves, confess, and ask for forgiveness. The Bible also calls us to grant forgiveness to those who sin against us. Both elements are important, but I want us to focus on our responsibility to forgive others.

Based upon the two New Testament words that are translated "forgive," Milton Vincent, a pastor in California, defines forgiveness as "(a) to send away sin from between you and the one who sinned against you and to hold that sin against the offender no more; (b) to release ("send away") the offender from the consequences they deserve from you as a result of the sins they have committed against you; and (c) to positively favor them with blessings they do not deserve."

This is a high calling and, humanly speaking, impossible. Who does this? Who can do this? Enter the gospel. The reason why we are so reluctant to forgive is because we forget what Christ has done for us. We must remember that we were His enemies (Rom 5:10), engaged in evil deeds that were hostile toward God (Col 1:21), and deserved eternal wrath (Eph 2:3). But God, who is rich in grace and mercy, sent His Son to suffer in our place, removed the sin that divided us from God, received the punishment that we deserved, and gave us the goodness of forgiveness and eternal life that we do not deserve.

Jesus said that we are to forgive seventy times

seven (Matt 18:22). Now we know that Jesus was not literally saying that we are to forgive 490 times. But, for the sake of argument, let's stick with that number. In the context, Peter just asked, "how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" (18:21). Peter says "my brother," meaning one singular person. So when Jesus says that we are to forgive seventy times seven, He is saying that we are to forgive

not just 490 times total, but 490 times for each "brother" who would sin against us! That is a lot of forgiveness! After Jesus gives this answer, He goes on to tell the parable of the unforgiving servant, the one who was forgiven a mountain of debt and failed to forgive a small debt owed to him. Jesus teaches this parable to help His disciples, and us, realize that no one can ever sin against us nearly as much as we have sinned against God. Therefore, we have no excuse but to graciously forgive out of the mountain of grace that has been given to us.

Since we are most like God when we forgive, then I pray that the Lord will help us remember the gospel and give us the grace we need to say, "I forgive you."



