



## ***WHY IS IT SO HARD TO SAY SORRY?***

I recently surveyed some over 60's to find out how long they had been married, 30, 40 50 and even 60 years. You would think that being married for so long you would be able to work out what makes for good relationships. We all know there are times that we differ on things, sometimes us men can be insensitive to our wives feelings. Other times ladies you don't have the same passion as your husband about the footy match on the TV or the cricket. You might prefer to watch Emmerdale or pride and prejudice.

There are times when we upset each other. There are times when we upset other people. There are times when we wish we had never said what we have said, but don't we make it hard for ourselves rather than dealing with our own hurts and frustrations we take it out on someone else. We don't want to back down, we stick with the idea we are always in the right and that's that.

The problem for us is that when we let our pride dictate our actions we are in real danger of destroying the thing that is precious to us. The longer it goes on the harder it is to say sorry.

Preserving a relationship requires many skills. One of the most important of these is the ability to say I'm sorry. We all make mistakes. Hurting each other from time to time is inevitable, especially in a close friendships. Never let pride stop you from saying you're sorry.

Some people are incapable of apologizing, because they are unable to admit that they may have made a mistake. There is no way for a friendship to last without apologies. Saying 'I'm Sorry' in a sincere and compassionate way will preserve your friendship and deepen the bond that you share.

I wonder how you deal with such situations. Are you the type who sticks to his guns despite the consequences, or do you seek to resolve issues rather than letting them fester. Are you in the habit of saying sorry, being genuinely remorseful for the upset hurt and injury you have done? Someone has said it takes a strong person to say they are sorry, but an even stronger person to forgive.



Maybe today there is stuff going on in your life that demands resolution. Maybe it's down to you to admit you're at fault and apologise. But just saying something doesn't deal with the problems we cause. If we genuinely sorry it has be exhibited by a determination not to do the same thing again. That's why it's so hard to say sorry. We can try very hard to curb our temper or selfishness, but old habits die hard.

The Bible has a lot to say about this sort of thing. The Bible says that this desire to be changed and transformed so we don't do the things we will have to say sorry for is called repentance. Genuine sorrow for our actions coupled with the desire to live in a right relationship with each other is only part of our problem. It helps us deal with the times when we have done wrong, not just with each other but also in our relationship with God.

Someone has said 'To forgive is divine'. That's the point; it is a trait that we learn from our creator. He has shown us that it is possible to be forgiven when we are truly repentant. The reason we are not afraid to say we are sorry is because through Christ God has taken away the offence of our sin against him.



Our Bible verse shows us how God has made this possible.

*2 Cor 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (NIV)*

Do you see what it says God made a swap between you and someone else. Your wrongdoing which the Bible describes as sin has been taken from you and given to another. The other person is Jesus Christ. Just listen to a few more verses from 2 Cor 5.

*17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation*

Can I put it to you like this, the reason Christians are not worried about saying sorry is that God has made us the wonderful promise of forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith. He no longer sees us as sinful people, but as righteous. God takes your sin and mine and places it on Jesus. He paid the penalty for my sinfulness by his death on the cross. He died in my place. God says that debt has been paid. And I am given his righteousness by God. The Bible tells us we are saved by God's free gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Why has God done this? Simply because of his great love for you. He has provided us a way to know him and be with him not just for now but all eternity.

One of the hardest things I have witnessed is the fracture in family relationships which have not been resolved even after the death of their parents. As those for whom God has provided mercy and forgiveness to the penitent; let us take the lead in healing our relationships with others as a testimony to what God has done for us in Christ.

It takes a strong person to say sorry, but a stronger person to show forgiveness

We are aware that this may raise some big issues in some people's lives in their relationships with family, friends and even folk at work. Sorrow and forgiveness meet together at the cross. The really hard bit is translating what we have received by faith in from God into positive action in our relationships with each other. If we are serious about healing relationships, then we have our Father's assurance that when we pray through the matter with him he will answer and show us the way forward according to his good purposes.

*If it would be helpful to have a chat about something that you are struggling with at present, please contact any member of the Chaplaincy team.*

*Nigel Selby*