

## Steve Keyser

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**From:** Melissa Maher <melissa@mercystreet.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 2, 2020 4:31 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** The Tone of Forgiveness



**Hope. Everyone Needs Some.**

Hey Mercy Street family,

**This Saturday we will talk about forgiveness.** The Bible passage will be read by two young people: Carina and Gabriel, Jr. Hearing the Lord's Prayer in their soft, high-pitched voices will stir us to see the simplicity **and** life-long journey of living as forgiven-ones. "Forgive us our debts and trespasses as we forgive those indebted or who trespass against us" has the tone of child-like faith. It's seems so easy but the complexity of relationships reveal just how messy it can be.

We are 112 days into this quarantine wilderness. In one sense you've had time to take inventory of the relationships which nurture growth and joy. Keep investing in these! On the other hand, perhaps you've uncovered new layers of grief or pain in broken relationships. The spiritual discipline of forgiveness has always baffled me. I am forgiven. Nothing I could say or do would change God's promise to cast my *small-thinking, petty arguments or character defects* as far as the east is from the west. And the same promise is true for you. Forgiveness is to be received, not earned.

Here's what's baffling. When it comes to practicing the discipline of forgiveness—I often want the other person to earn my mercy. To beg for my forgiveness. This is stinkin'-thinkin' because I'd crumble if God came to me on the same terms. So why is forgiveness so difficult?

1. Forgiveness always begins with God. By-passing the grace we've been given leaves us bankrupt of extending mercy to another.

2. To receive forgiveness is not to continually convict yourself. To embrace God's radical grace and be transformed.
3. Forgiveness happens in stages. There are endless layers of grief and resentment. Yet, with each layer comes new freedom.
4. The existence of pain is not a sign of unforgiveness. Pain is an invitation to go to the next layer.
5. Dressing the wounds of hurt through the healing balm of forgiveness rather than revenge.

A tone of anger and the pursuit of revenge serenade too many conflicts. Family arguments. Political quarrels. Competing belief systems. As followers of Jesus, we are called to imitate the One we love. Let's offer the child-like song of mercy and forgiveness. It's a costly gift we shouldn't squander. It takes a while to learn the pitch and key. But, ah the melody is so sweet. So amazing. Just like grace.

See you online on our Facebook page or website. Links are below.  
 Loved you are,  
 Melissa

**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE**  
[www.mercystreet.org](http://www.mercystreet.org)

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**Steeeeeve's Corner**

Jesus said, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest" (Mark 6:31). The stresses of this pandemic have made me at times weary, tired, exhausted, spent, drained, and just tuckered out – physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Too often I find something waiting just beyond the end of quiet time to distract me. There it lies in the back of my mind; a nagging feeling, demanding attention - priority or importance immaterial. I can learn from Jesus in this. He always made time to withdraw from the crowds and be alone with the Father.



**WHAT'S COMING UP**

**Check out our virtual and in-person activities!!**

Post Worship Hangout - Saturdays 6:30 - 7:30. **Zoom link.**

This is my plan for a few days - to step out of my normal routine and simply be with God with no expectations. I know He loves and accepts me unconditionally. Who knows, I might even get a nap in or two. Don't forget for a moment, loved you are. ~  
Steve [steve@mercystreet.org](mailto:steve@mercystreet.org) or [amanda@mercystreet.org](mailto:amanda@mercystreet.org)

Spirituality and Recovery -  
Saturdays 7-8 pm. [Zoom link.](#)

Sermon Reflection: 6pm [more info](#)

Group + Church: [more info](#)

Have a prayer request? **Let us know** online and our prayer team will lift you up.

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## Hope Dealer Spotlight



God's presence watches over us continually. Someone said that hardships often prepare ordinary people for extraordinary things. ~ R. A.

It helped me at the beginning of all this to think about being "safe at home" instead of "trapped at home." I encourage you to stay focused on today - just one moment at a time. Dive into your recovery, your

higher power, and ... Just. Keep. Going. ~ Amber

We are all going through a very different time right now. Remember to lean on God! It can get messy and chaotic, but God is in the middle of it all, holding your hand and telling you to 'Be Not Afraid.' May the peace and love of God fill your heart always. ~ Anonymous

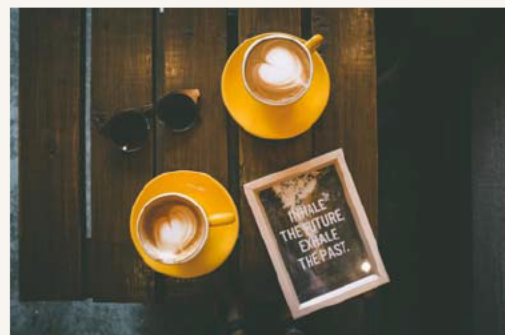
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## **SUPPORT RESOURCES**

### **Mental Health Resources for Now:**

NAMI and **Crisis Text Line** have partnered to bring crisis texting to our communities. Their goal is to provide hope and resources to any person who needs help. By simply texting the word "NAMI" to 741741 anyone can directly connect with a crisis counselor trained to offer help and put them at ease. NAMI Crisis Text Line is open 24/7 - text NAMI to 741741. FREE.

### **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**



We can all help prevent suicide. The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals.

Call 1-800-273-8255. Available 24 hours everyday. FREE.

**BetterHelp** - Making professional counseling accessible, affordable, convenient Professional, licensed, vetted counselors. Go to [www.betterhelp.com](http://www.betterhelp.com) for more info.

### Covid-19 Mental Health Support Line

**12 Step Meetings--canceled on campus.**  
**Online Recovery Meetings**

**Mental Health Resources**

713-354-4497  
11140 Greenbay St  
Houston, Texas 77024

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