

Title: Strong Enough To Forgive - John 13 18-30

Read:

¹⁸⁻²⁰"I'm not including all of you in this. I know precisely whom I've selected, so as not to interfere with the fulfilment of this Scripture: The one who ate bread at my table Turned on his heel against me. "I'm telling you all this ahead of time so that when it happens you will believe that I am who I say I am. Make sure you get this right: Receiving someone I send is the same as receiving me, just as receiving me is the same as receiving the One who sent me." ²¹After he said these things, Jesus became visibly upset, and then he told them why. "One of you is going to betray me." ²²⁻²⁵The disciples looked around at one another, wondering who on earth he was talking about. One of the disciples, the one Jesus loved dearly, was reclining against him, his head on his shoulder. Peter motioned to him to ask who Jesus might be talking about. So, being the closest, he said, "Master, who?" ²⁶⁻²⁷Jesus said, "The one to whom I give this crust of bread after I've dipped it." Then he dipped the crust and gave it to Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot. As soon as the bread was in his hand, Satan entered him. "What you must do," said Jesus, "do. Do it and get it over with." ²⁸⁻²⁹No one around the supper table knew why he said this to him. Some thought that since Judas was their treasurer, Jesus was telling him to buy what they needed for the Feast, or that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰Judas, with the piece of bread, left. It was night.

Think:

God built us in a funny way, because he built us with a need for friendship. Some of us love to have lots of friends, others of us only need one friend, but most of us, need friendship. The problem with friendship is, it's a risky business. It's risky, because you have to put your trust in a person, in order for them to be your friend. There also seems to be some sort of connection between the amount of trust you put in someone and the depth of friendship you have with them. Some friends at your school or college are just passing acquaintances and you put little trust in them, whilst you may have other friends who know you much better and whom your trust much more. Jesus was the same, he had hundreds of friends and followers, but he trusted the twelve, much more, and even within the twelve, there one or two he, trusted even more. Jesus also knew the danger of trusting people, because he knew all too well that people stuff up and betray our trust. Jesus was ultimately betrayed by one of his close friends, Judas, and not only that, he knew Judas would betray him ahead of time. So the next time a friend stuffs up and tells others something that you wanted kept quiet, you can know that you are in good company. Jesus knew the pain of betrayal just like you do, but Jesus was also able to forgive people. That's the best example for us. We too, should forgive people that hurt us. That doesn't mean that we are not careful about what we say to them in the future, because trust, must be earned. But it does mean, that we understand that everyone makes mistakes, and we give them another chance. Because, with Jesus as our example, we can be strong enough to forgive.

Pray:

Father when people hurt my feelings, and betray my trust, would you please use your Spirit to guide me and give me the strength to forgive them. Amen.

Action:

Wow, forgiving people is hard. Is there someone who has hurt you in the past, who you have not forgiven yet? Pray long and hard, for strength, to forgive them, and then take the steps you need to take, to act on that forgiveness. Bye for now.