

RELIGION AND LIFE

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WE ARE CALLED TO FORGIVE

S. R. Crockett once told this story. A young man came home one evening in deep dejection. His mother saw that he was troubled and guessed the cause—he had quarrelled with his best girl and they had parted in anger. She brought their conversation to a point where she could tell a story of her own girlhood, a story of a rift which had never been healed, and she added: "He was not nearly as good a man as your father, but he was my first."

The woman advised her son to go back at once and make it up, adding that he would find her in tears. He did what she told him to do and found the situation exactly as she had described it. A lover's quarrel is just silly. The more tenderly they love the

more terribly it hurts. But if it is silly to let it happen, it is wicked to let it stand. Both hearts bleed and both are eager for reconciliation, if only the first step could be taken.

Put your pride in your pocket and take that first step. You will find Crockett's diagnosis as true to life now as when it was written.

When anyone is wounded his vital energies concentrate on healing the hurt. Now a personal quarrel is a wound in the social organism, and every good instinct in the community calls for reconciliation.

It is clearly the will of God for each person concerned to do his part in healing the sore.

Jesus dealt with that question of the first step, and put it squarely up to the injured party to take it.

It was surely the obligation of

the one who did the wrong to take the initiative in righting it, but so important is peace between man and man that even the sufferer should try to restore it.

Here is the way Jesus dealt with the problem: "Peter came up and said to Him: 'Lord how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? As many as seven times?'"

Jesus said to him: "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven." In other words, there are no letters for the spirit of forgiveness. Always and everywhere it seeks for openings for action.

Jesus taught us to pray: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." We are called to forgive as we have been forgiven.

But God can forgive only on the condition of repentance.

As long as the offender persists in his offence and holds the position taken when he was doing the wrong, he does not want forgiveness and cannot accept it. He stands committed to the offence.

So Jesus calls on the injured party to try to bring the wrongdoer to a sense of the wrong he has done. "If thy brother sin against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother."

One of the hardest things in life is to take this first step. We try to fence off the obligation with the argument that it is his duty to act first.

But Jesus insists that the healing of the wound is so necessary

that even the man who is unworthy should do all that he can to quell the spirit of antagonism and reestablish peace.

Then He stresses the terrific responsibility that such action places on the other party to meet the advances—in the spirit in which they are made—if after all that can be done to restore peace the offender persists in his antagonism, "let him be to you as a heathen man and a publican."

A LIMIT

There is a limit to God's forgiveness. It is possible for a sinner to sin beyond that limit—the most dreadful truth in the Bible. It is true that this limit lies not in God's willingness to forgive when the sinner repents but in the sinner's ability to repent.

terrible because man puts it there. Hence the divine urgency: "Now is the accepted time! Now is the day of salvation."

All this magnifies the mercy of God. It takes all the forms that it can take—His patience, His forbearance, the allowances He makes for our imitations. His tender solicitude for our welfare in time and eternity.

In an address we heard recently, emphasis was laid on the fact that all this is "for me." The Gospel is a personal Saviour appealing to persons. Each of us is included. And the provision for each is full and free.

Forgiveness is thus an integral part of God's attitude toward men and dealings with men. It ought, therefore, to be an integral

part of our dealings with one another.

Someone has said that to understand all is to forgive all. We cannot be quite sure of this, because sweeping statements often blur the facts. But certainly to learn all that is behind an action makes us pause before judging that action.

GEORGETOWN

Representing the Georgetown sub-division of the Catholic Women's League at the Regional C.W.L. Conference held in St. Mary's hall in Montague on Sunday October 18, were: Mrs. William Murphy; Mrs. P.L. Boudreau; Mrs. W.J. Fitzgerald and Mrs. Agnes Murphy.

family of Justice have taken up residence in Georgetown.

Mr. Charles A. Fraser is a patient in the Kings County Memorial Hospital in Montague. Mrs. Harold Publicover, attended the Junior Red Cross "Workshop" held at Red Cross Headquarters in Charlottetown on Saturday, Oct. 17.

Mr. Freddy MacLean of the Canadian Army, recently returned home from a tour of duty with the Canadian Armed Forces in Germany, and he is the guest of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm MacLean.

Mrs. C.A. Fraser, accompanied by Mrs. N.W. Hanson, Master Kenny Richards and Mrs. Frank MacLean, motored to Charlottetown on Friday.

She and Mrs. F.B. Smith, accompanied by Miss Doreen Smith, Miss Joan Batchelder, Miss MacLean and Miss Elaine Scully, recently motored to New Glasgow, N.S. where they visited Master Joseph Marie at St. John's Convent.

Miss Sheila DeLory left Tuesday for Halifax, N.S. where she will visit with her brother Mr. Richard DeLory and Mrs. DeLory.

Congratulations are being extended to Miss Janie David, her winning of a beautiful bicycle in the Jiffy Crazy Mixed-Animal Contest. Master Bobby MacGrath Lorne Valley was a recent guest of his sister, Mrs. Frank Parker and Miss Parker.

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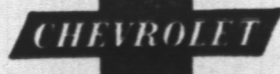
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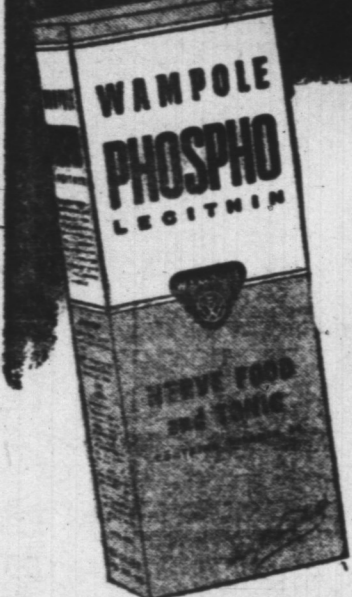


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