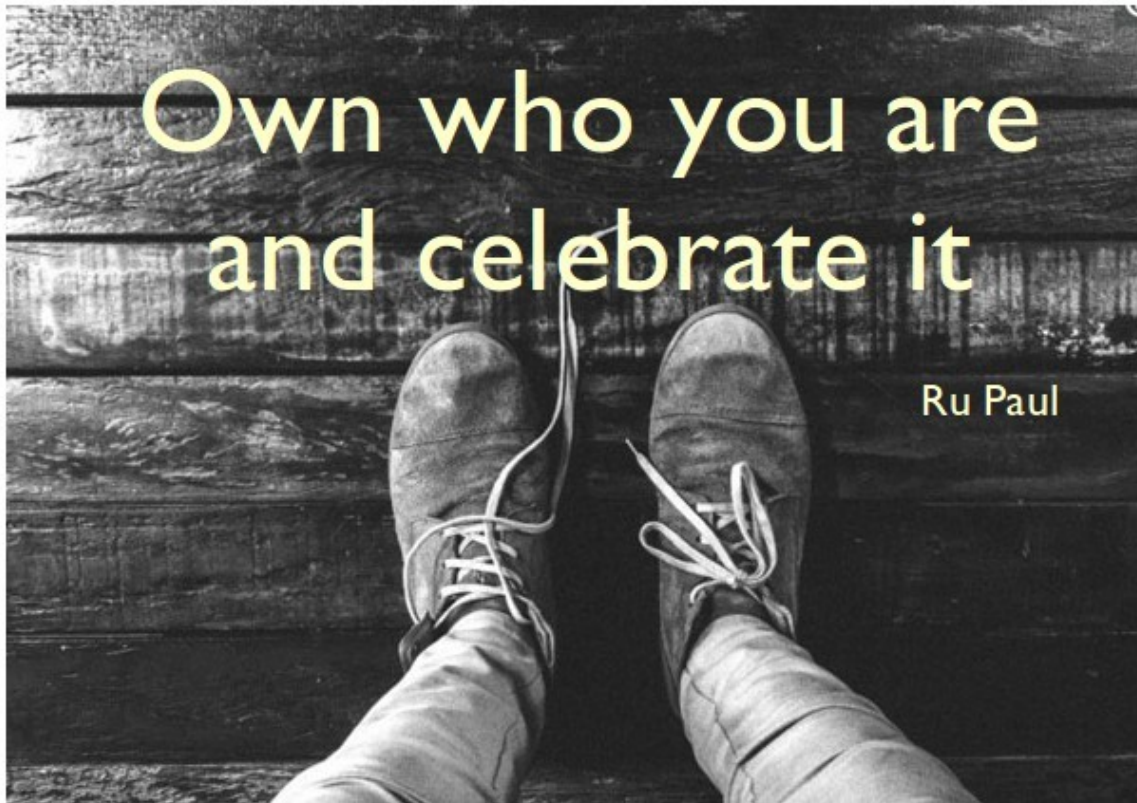


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Who needs to be forgiven these days?



A current belief is we are so much in control of our lives that we do NOT need forgiveness. We are in control and we are masters of everything.

Is that ever actually true?

When the first disciples in Jerusalem converted a thousand people to Christianity they didn't say "You'll be fine, just join us as one happy family!", what they actually said to the whole crowd was "Repent and be saved", "Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven."

So for the first disciples, and for all Christians ever since then, we care for others so much that we want you to acknowledge where you are, repent first and receive then the incredible forgiveness Jesus Christ gives to us so that we can be healed and made whole again as a complete person. God can then work on us and change us into the person God wants us to become and to be.

St Paul wrote in Romans at chapter 7 that he wanted to do good but kept on getting things wrong:

²¹ *So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with*

me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. ²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So if even St Paul who is a really good person and a Saint keeps getting it wrong then who are we to suggest we are better than St Paul ?

If even St Paul constantly needs the forgiveness given by Jesus Christ then so does every one of us. This means that all of us need to constantly repent of the wrong we do and receive the forgiveness that Jesus Christ freely gives to every one of us. What matters is the recognition that we are imperfect, and realising for ourselves the value of forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

Our Lord Jesus Christ comes to us as we are, that much is true. What is NOT true is that we should simply stay as we are and not be prepared to be changed by Jesus Christ at all.

Nobody is saying what anyone's mistaken-ness is, that much is always unique to each person, and it is not our place to judge others. What does matter is the constant, open, willingness of each of us to be changed by Jesus Christ. If anyone is unwilling to be changed then we are stuck in a rut and we are then seen to be simply worshipping ourselves as we are. We are then not worshipping and accepting Jesus Christ at all.

Jesus Christ chose, completely voluntarily, to take the wrongs of humanity upon himself and to suffer the full and worst possible punishment. This is not a popular thing to say, and yet it is clear that it is what happened on the cross throughout the Bible. Jesus Christ chose to give us forgiveness so we have yet another chance to be a better person. To Accept Jesus Christ's gift, to be a Christian, is to accept that Jesus Christ will, and does, change us for the better.

St Paul says in Romans chapter 8:

⁷ The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

So to be a Christian, by definition a believer in Jesus Christ, we have to, and we must, be open to God and not have a closed mind. Jesus Christ comes to us as we are, that much is true. What is NOT true is that we should simply stay as we are and not be prepared to be changed by Jesus Christ at all.

As it says in Romans chapter 5:

⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

And as it says in Romans chapter 8:

¹ There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus

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