

## Summary Session 4: Forgive Us Our Trespasses

### Biggest change between Lk & Mt

- Lk: '*Forgive us our sins for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.*'
- Mt: '*& forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.*'
- English version is a combination of Lk & Mt:
  - *& forgive us our trespasses* (or: *forgive us our debts*)
  - *As we forgive those who trespass against us* (or: *as we forgive our debtors*).
  - Lk: present tense "*as we forgive*"
  - Mt: past tense – disciples have already forgiven their debtors

### Community, new family of God

- Peter's question: *how often shall I forgive my brother?* (Mt 18:21-22)
  - Seventy seven times (cf. Gen 4:23-24) = always, without limit
  - Mt 18 (Community Discourse): my brother is another member of God's family
  - Unconditional forgiveness is part of life-breath of community
  - No limits: how did Jesus treat tax collectors & sinners?

### Forgiveness in Practice – Mt 5:23-24

- Offering a gift at the altar in the Jerusalem Temple
  - Forgiveness of one another is more important than temple worship
  - Message of the Prophets e.g. Amos 5:21-24
  - Forgiveness & reconciliation = indispensable precondition for worship
  - Mt 5:7, 9 *Blessed are the merciful... the peacemakers...*
  - God takes the initiative in forgiveness
    - *Our Father* in the celebration of the Eucharist
    - Becoming a sacrifice following example of Jesus (Lk 19:10)

### Mention of sin (cf. Mt 6:14-15)

- Three key words: sin, trespasses, debts
  - Lk: sin – *hamartia* = to miss the mark, to fall short (cf. archery)
  - Mt: trespass – *paraptomata* = to step over the line
  - Lk & Mt: debts – Aramaic = sins
- *Forgive us our sins/debts*
  - Eschatological sense – at Last Judgement
  - Daily forgiveness
  - We cannot earn God's forgiveness
  - "*Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us*"
    - We ask God to forgive us in exactly the same way that we have forgiven others.
    - Cf. Sirach 28:4.

### Significance of forgiveness in the Synoptics

- Mk 11:25 – forgive others when praying before God
- Mt: *Lord's Prayer* is followed by teaching on forgiveness
- Only in Lk does Jesus give an example of forgiving others
  - *Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing* (Lk 23:34; cf. Acts 7:60)