「許すということ」
"Forgiveness"

ルカによる福音書　23章34節（Luke 23:34）

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When I was trying to decide what to talk about for today's worship, I recalled the conversations I overheard recently:
-a man on the cell phone at the gas station: "**Forgive** me, it won't happen again!"
-a school child crying to her mother at the bus stop: "She's never going to **forgive** me."
-a woman at the Japanese restaurant: ひどいでしょ？絶対許せない！

So it occurred to me to talk about FORGIVENESS.

It must be an important word... after all, we all said the word <u>forgive</u> today. Do you know when? In the Lord's Prayer, of course!

"FORGIVE US OUR SINS, AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO SIN AGAINST US."

Who told us to say this prayer? Jesus did!   So it must be very important.

Now, raise your hand if you've done something in your life that needs forgiving.
How about when you have had to forgive someone?
We have all been in the position of having to forgive or needing forgiveness ourselves.

How do we handle a situation where someone has wronged us, and we need to forgive them?
Let's look at our Savior, Jesus Christ, who was put on the cross for no good reason. How does he handle this unjust act of betrayal?

He said, "Father, *forgive* them, for they know not what they do."

When we forgive, we don't give in to evil or pretend that it didn't happen. Forgiveness is about us and not the people who did us wrong. It is about how we respond to the wrong. We cannot control what others do, but we <u>can</u> control how we react to it. Jesus responded with love, knowing so clearly his relationship to God, and he was triumphantly resurrected after his death. God did not let him down.

Forgiveness is the ability to love no matter what evil or wrong is thrown our way. Forgiveness brings us peace and perpetuates peace. Forgiveness brings us closer to God because "God is love"(1 John 4:8,16), and we are forever included in that love. So be at peace, and forgive!

2013年10月3日　聖学院アトランタ国際学校　小学部礼拝