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THE VARIETIES OF FORGIVENESS

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In this lecture I am going to discuss a number of issues appertaining to interpersonal forgiveness in a Christian or post-Christian ethical context. I will also discuss self-forgiveness. I shall argue that while much academic work tends to focus on the idea that there is an ideal, perfect, pure or true form of forgiveness from which others derogate, there are, in fact, numerous forms of forgiveness and that the merits of one do not necessarily undermine the different merits of another.

In much of the twentieth century, philosophers were disinclined to engage with forgiveness because of its associations with Christian piety and the danger that their efforts might become sermonic, rather than genuinely ethical.[i] However, while Christian preachers have often enjoined their congregations to forgive, it is far from clear that their sermons have been especially effective in this regard; the capacity for Christians to remember and resent offences, and to develop sectarian attitudes that settle into hatred and even become violent are obvious enough. One of the reasons for this may be found in C. S. Lewis' remark in *Mere Christianity*, written shortly after the Second World War. Lewis had tried on several occasions to encourage people to connect the Christian idea and practice of forgiveness with their attitudes towards those who had been enemies in the war. He found this to be extremely hard going and really didn't have much success. His failure caused him to remark that 'everyone thinks forgiveness is a lovely idea, until they have something to forgive'.[ii]

That's certainly the way it is sometimes, but the opposite happens too. Some people rarely think about forgiveness at all until something happens to them that troubles them deeply and raises a profound question about the negative and hostile feelings that they find themselves developing. I recall vividly the occasion when the mother of a murdered teenager asked me whether or not she must forgive the members of the gang responsible for his death. As we were talking in a church building at the time, I took the view that she was thinking that she would need to be able to forgive her son's murderers in order to be on good terms with God.

Whether or not I am interpreting her correctly, that is definitely a line of thinking that has the force of committed and cultural Christianity behind it. For instance, in October 2006 the Nickel Mines Amish community in Pennsylvania suffered a terrible tragedy when a gunman imprisoned a dozen young girls in their school, killed five, wounded others and then killed himself. The gunman was local (though not Amish) and members of the community immediately reached out to members of his family, seeking to console and support them, as well as the families of the victims.[iii]

Members of the community believed that they had no choice but to offer such forgiveness in the aftermath of such an atrocity.[iv] The reason for their doing so was the Bible - more specifically words and emphases found in Matthew's gospel where, in chapter 6, Jesus adds a gloss to the words in the Lord's Prayer, 'forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us', as follows: 'For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you'. (Matthew 6.14 & 15)

There are plenty of people who have taken this as the Christian view of forgiveness. The playwright and poet Charles Williams wrote about the 'terror' of the little word 'as': 'forgiveness of injures is demanded of the Christian ... and it is demanded entirely.'[v] A very different figure, R. T. Kendall, longstanding charismatic pastor of

Westminster Chapel, wrote a book called *Total Forgiveness* which proceeds along similar lines. For him forgiveness is the total eradication of bitterness, the merciful refusal to punish or seek punishment, and the decision 'to keep no record of wrongs'. For Kendall, unlike many Christian writers on this subject, forgiveness is not connected to reconciliation. Indeed he counsels that the forgiving person should not engage with the person whom they seek to forgive; in particular, not suggest to that person that they are trying to forgive them as, in his experience, this inevitably inflames the situation.

There is no doubt that Matthew's gospel can be read in such a way as to encourage the view that victims *must* forgive. A rather different approach emerges if Luke's gospel comes into focus where we find Jesus saying, 'If another disciple sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive.' (Luke 17.3.) The point here is forgiveness is mandated, it should come not immediately after sin alone (so to speak), but after sin *and repentance*.

Before addressing the question of repentance, and what some have called 'conditional forgiveness' as opposed to 'unconditional forgiveness', we should reflect on what is involved in any attempt to develop an ethic of inter-personal forgiveness from the New Testament. There are two factors to consider here. First is that the early Christian communities were places of fellowship and solidarity; where sins between brothers and sisters are mentioned or implied, they are almost certainly not life-changing or life-ending atrocities. We are not in the territory of the terrorist or of the tyrant, or of traumatic harm. Care must be taken with ethical or sermonic extrapolation from minor social sins of the Biblical communities to, for instance, the aftermath of torture, abuse or any kind of traumatising harm that people may experience today.

The second point is that in both the gospels and epistles there is the idea that the forgiveness given by God to the average human sinner in the process of salvation is such a superlative act of kindness and generosity that it creates a context in which Christian believers or disciples should be prepared to see sins and offences against themselves as relatively trivial, and act with such generous kindness towards each other as befits those who are themselves recipients of generosity. Paul thus writes to the Colossians that they must 'Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. (Colossians 3.13) and in Ephesians we read 'Just as God in Christ has forgiven you so you also ought to forgive one another' (Ephesians 4.32) and in Romans Paul writes that 'all have sinned and all have fallen short of the glory of God' (Romans 3.23). The point is also made in hyperbolic form in the parable of the unforgiving slave in Matthew 18. In this story a slave who has had a huge debt cancelled by his 'lord' takes a mean attitude towards a fellow slave who owes him very little. His hardheartedness goes down very badly with the other slaves who report the matter to the 'lord' who replies as follows. "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?". But the unforgiving slave gets more than a dressing down ... 'In anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt.' Jesus immediately follows-up the story with this threat, 'So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.' (Matthew 18. 32b-35)

Although we are not in the habit of handing over the ungrateful beneficiaries of our generosity to be tortured, we can see the point behind the hyperbole here. When the sins inflicted on any individual and the consequent inconvenience are indeed relatively slight, we should be quick to forgive, knowing that in the past others have forgiven us far greater or worse things. But is this an imperative for every situation? Clearly not. Should others repeatedly harm us, violate our personhood in some way, oppress us or cruelly abuse us, we are in different territory. Again, the question of extrapolation of easy-going forgiveness to more traumatic circumstances can be problematic; and it is perhaps right that C. S. Lewis was met by a combination of resistance and blank faces when he suggested that people think about how Poles might forgive members of the Gestapo in the early 1950s. People intuited that the offence was of a different order to those that they are normally able to forgive, and that there was no off-the-peg model of forgiveness that would seem to fit the case. This doesn't mean that there can and should be no forgiveness in such situations, but it does mean that forgiveness might, perhaps should, take a completely different form.

However, what we might call the Christian case for forgiveness is significantly cranked-up when the words of Jesus from the cross in Luke 23 are bought to mind. This is where the crucified Christ says, 'Father forgive them

for they know not what they do'. These few words have received extensive discussion in recent years by those interested in forgiveness. Some seek to diminish their significance, referring perhaps to the point that they *do not appear* in the most ancient manuscripts of the gospels, or that they are not an expression of forgiveness, but a plea that people be *excused* on the grounds that they are ignorant of the consequences of their own actions, or by pointing out that these words are not a declaration of forgiveness on the part of the victim, but a *prayer* from the victim that God will forgive the executioners.

Others read them as if they are setting an example that disciples of Christ should follow. It's not uncommon to hear Christian victims of violence, who have sought to forgive those responsible for their harm, referring back to these words and saying, 'if Christ could forgive his killers, then I should be able to forgive those who have done this to me'. As a fifteen-year-old boy, Stephen Ross was at the Enniskillen War Memorial in 1987 when an IRA bomb was detonated, killing and maiming many people. He was severely injured and his face had to be held together by a wire frame for a whole year after the attack. Ross talks about his journey of forgiveness by referring to these words in Luke's gospel. Imitation of Christ is not his only motivation, however, as he is alert to the danger of the emotional aftermath of significant harm, saying 'anger will consume you'. What is clear is that for him forgiveness was a significant personal challenge; it did not come naturally or instantly, but he committed to it and seems to have come through the experience with no desire for revenge and admirably little bitterness.

This idea that 'forgiveness' is the word to be used when we describe the process of freeing ourselves from the negative emotionality of victimhood goes back to Joseph Butler who gave two important sermons at Rolls Inn in the seventeenth century, 'Upon Resentment' and 'Upon the Forgiveness of Injuries'. Butler argued that resentment was not just a bad feeling, but a divinely implanted moral feeling; that it served a noble ethical or spiritual purpose and therefore should not be extinguished too quickly or easily, despite the fact that it is an uncomfortable passion to live with. In fact, while plenty of people have put forward the idea that Butler proposed that forgiveness was the forswearing of *resentment* it is more true to say that he saw forgiveness as the forswearing of *revenge*, together with the relinquishing or refusal to adopt extreme forms of negativity, such as hatred.

A neighbour of Stephen Ross in Eniskillen in 1987 is a man who did more than any to project the value of a forgiving spirit into the troubles of Northern Ireland. Gordon Wilson was holding his daughter, Marie, in his arms when she died of wounds sustained in the same bomb blast and, in a brief radio interview the same day, and in an extended interview the following morning, calmly asserted that he bore 'no grudge' against the bombers, that he had 'no ill-will'. His modest, brief and temperate words drew huge attention; the Queen mentioned him in her Christmas Day broadcast just six weeks later. But opinion was divided. Some thought it was wonderful. Some thought it was absurd that he should forgive so promptly; others were enraged that he was not enraged.

However, Gordon Wilson didn't pronounce forgiveness, and didn't pretend to speak for others and so much criticism of him is displaced. But his prompt remarks do invite us to ask the question as to whether it is important that perpetrators of atrocities are manifestly repentant before the possibility of forgiveness arises. To put it bluntly - should Wilson not have had at least some ill-will towards those who callously murdered his daughter? Should he not have resented her death, as well as grieved it.

The academic debate about the need for repentance before forgiveness is an absorbing, but somewhat strange one. It uses religious vocabulary, but has featured more in the discussions of Anglophone philosophers and ethicists than in religious writers. The argument has been that for forgiveness to be ethical and just, moral and good, it should not be granted to those who have not changed their attitude and behaviour since they offended. The imperative driving this discussion has been 'justice'. The concern is that if forgiveness removes from wrongdoers the consequences that follow from their inhuman actions, in terms of opprobrium, punishment and alienation, then they will simply persist in their abominably harmful and unjust ways.[vi]

Ecclesiastical authorities responding to the crisis of sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults by authority figures within the church have also underlined the importance of repentance on the part of those who have perpetrated such abuse. Interestingly their focus is not on interpersonal forgiveness (that of perpetrator by victim) but on divine forgiveness - that of perpetrator by God. Repentance in this case is pivotal: 'Turning to God to

receive forgiveness also involves turning away from the wrong we have done ... Responding to God's offer of salvation ... involves repentance as well as boundless thankfulness'.[vii]

The small volume from which I have just quoted does not discuss how the perpetrator of abuse might go about seeking forgiveness from the victim, but it does ask how the church should speak of forgiveness to those who have experienced abuse. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, it takes a very different line to the version derived from Matthew's gospel identified above - the idea that it is imperative that victims remove every aspect of negative emotion from their heart. The starting point is that the church should listen to victims rather than preach to them; and it seeks to put individuals at ease if they find the Lord's Prayer's petition, 'forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us' personally threatening, and to clarify that an idealised exchange model of forgiveness, where perfect resentment is met by perfect repentance, leading to perfect forgiveness, is not something that tends to happen in real life. It asserts that forgiveness is not something that happens to order, whether by decision or as a result of a process, but that it may emerge from an on-going struggle when a victim or survivor commits not to forgive *per se*, but to struggle daily with the claims of both justice and mercy.

An example of a case where forgiveness has not happened, but where it may emerge, is perhaps offered by Michael Lapsley, who was sent a letter bomb in South Africa just as the apartheid era was coming to an end. Lapsley is an Anglican priest and monk, who has given the question of forgiveness a great deal of thought. When people ask him whether he has forgiven the bomber he says, 'how can I? I don't know who the bomber was. At this stage forgiveness is not on the table.' He goes on to write.

> If one day someone rings my bell and when I open the door says, 'I'm the person who sent you the letter bomb. Will you forgive me?' Now for the first time, forgiveness is on the table.
>
> What do I say, yes, no, not yet? What I might say is, 'Excuse me, sir, do you still make letter bombs?' If the person were to say, 'Oh no, actually I work at the local children's hospital,' then I might say, 'Yes, of course I forgive you.' However, what follows in my imaginary scenario is important. As we sit and drink tea together, I would say, 'Though I have forgiven you, I still have no hands. I still have only one eye and my eardrums are damaged. I will live forever with the consequences of what you did, which means that I will need assistance for the rest of my life. Of course you will help pay for that, not as a condition of forgiveness, but as a part of reparation and restitution in a way that is possible.'[viii]

For Lapsley it matters that the man is no longer making letter bombs. It also matters that he is now doing good work - spending his time on healing rather than harming others. Some feel that Lapsley is not generous enough in his forgiving attitude, but that makes me ask where they are coming from. If it is the inner purity or 'total forgiveness' perspective of R. T. Kendall, then it is relevant to note, as I have heard Michael say in person, 'I am not overwhelmed by resentment, bitterness or anger and I do not seek to avenge myself'. So Lapsley is not troubled by bitterness or fantasies of revenge, but by pain and the trouble caused by his inflicted disabilities. He does not see forgiveness as something that becomes a duty for a person because they have been hurt, but a possibility for someone who has admitted to, and repented of, inflicting harm on another. This is much more in line with the quotation from Luke's gospel mentioned earlier: 'If another disciple sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive.' (Luke 17.3.)

So there are different ways of looking at this. On the one hand we have forgiveness as a positive clearing out of resentment and negativity towards those who have harmed us, and on the other we have the need to maintain a dignified indignation when others inflict harm; until they show that they regret their actions, decide not to repeat them and repair at least some of the damage for which they are responsible.

In an encyclopaedic survey of recent writing about forgiveness, the American Jesuit, James Voiss, suggests that there both hard and soft violence in some of the writing around this and argues that the philosophers who insist on the priority of repentance are operating a circular argument.[ix] He also contrasts their desire for 'true forgiveness' (or 'just forgiveness') with the completely different approach of continental philosophy, which values and seeks 'pure forgiveness': a unilateral and generous act, that itself becomes *impossible* when someone has repented or when political or social reconciliation is being sought. This is the approach of Jacques Derrida and others, who see such

radical and pure forgiveness as profoundly paradoxical and who argue that when it happens it is a kind of 'madness'.

The situation in which we find ourselves when talking about forgiveness, then, is both practically difficult and intellectually contested. The word itself seems to have a high moral value and yet sometimes forgiveness seems quite impossible. For some, it is this impossibility itself which makes forgiveness so marvellous, while for others the impossibility is ethical and non-forgiveness is an important, if costly, moral stance to take when it would not be right, just or good to forgive.

But these are not the only problems with forgiveness. We have already touched briefly on the question of God's forgiveness of sinful human beings. It is a major aspect of Christian believing; the 'forgiveness of sins' is an article of faith in the Apostles Creed, where it is sandwiched between 'the communion of saints' and 'the resurrection of the body'. The question of whether or not it is right or just for God to forgive human beings is the question of 'atonement' and, although there are different theories of this, the general idea is that through the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the claims of justice have been met so that God is free to forgive any and all sins, and humans are free to seek and accept the forgiveness of God, without having to answer the claims of justice in their own case. Humans cannot earn God's forgiveness; they can only receive it as a gift. On the other hand, as the Church of England booklet, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation in the Aftermath of Abuse* argues, real repentance is required of the perpetrator in the confessional, and that means a willingness to subject oneself to the law of the land and the disciplines of safeguarding that are intended to reduce the likelihood of re-offending. God doesn't forgive people simply to cleanse their consciences before the next episode of abuse.

There is another area where the question of forgiveness is extremely vexed, but that is one that has a much less historical pedigree than the question of atonement. It is the question of self-forgiveness. Let me give this a little context.

In 2005 the first ever *Handbook of Forgiveness* was published.[x] Its subject is 'the art and science of forgiving'. Running to 600 pages, it is a volume that would have been unimaginable a decade before. Over seventy authors contributed. There are 33 chapters, one of which is a 40-page 'Forgiveness Bibliography' listing many scientific papers on the subject. A book that looks very much like a sequel, the *Handbook of the Psychology of Self-Forgiveness,* was published in 2017.[xi] Running to about 350 pages this is slightly more modest and the focus is clearly psychological. Self-forgiveness is understood as being 'one method by which people process self-condemnation in the aftermath of perceived wrongdoing or failure'. The focus here is not on the rights and wrongs of forgiving yourself, but on its intractability and complexity. Psychologists are interested in everyday behaviour, but are even more interested in extreme or difficult behaviours, and are, of course, concerned to help people towards good mental health. These factors have informed the sort of research that has been conducted and guidance given in this area.

My own feelings about self-forgiveness have developed over the years. In my book *Healing Agony*, which came out in 2012, I took the view that it was a mistaken phrase and that a more helpful and accurate one would be 'self-acceptance'.[xii] My view here was shaped by a paper in the *Journal of Religion and Health* that identified four serious problems with the notion of self-forgiveness, in addition to the observation that there is no rationale for it in traditional religion. The points were that self-forgiveness encourages unhealthy splitting of the self; that there is a conflict of interest between the self that judges and the self that forgives, that self-forgiveness encourages narcissistic focus on the self and that inter-personal and self-forgiveness involve different psychological processes.[xiii]

At that time I was also concerned about the possibility that once self-forgiveness became 'a thing' it would be the forgiveness of first resort for many, thereby robbing inter-personal forgiveness of its place and indeed its moralising power. The genius of inter-personal forgiveness, at least in the form where resentment is diminished by repentance, is that it allows people to move on, but only after they have acknowledged that an inflicted injury was both inexcusable and deeply harmful. Such forgiveness involves two movements, 'that was terribly wrong', followed by, 'and yet we can overcome it together through some kind of continued relationship in which the pain and resentment of inflicted suffering is met by regret, efforts at repair and resolve not to repeat'. This is not the sort of process that can happen within an individual; it only makes sense in a relationship. But once we recognise

that this is a form, but not the only form, of inter-personal forgiveness, then it becomes easier to imagine healthy forms of self-forgiveness.

This is perhaps a good moment at which to step back and survey the history of reflections about forgiveness. The story moves from the theology of God's forgiveness, to the application of religious teaching to inter-personal situations, to a more objective philosophical engagement with the ethics of forgiveness, to the development of the psychology of forgiveness as a way of removing from the victim's psyche painful emotions that are retained in the aftermath of an offence, injury or violation, and finally on to the naming of self-forgiveness as a process that allows offenders and perpetrators to live with themselves.

I have been arguing that there is not one pure, true or ideal form of forgiveness; rather there are many forms, all of which have things in common, but none of which should be judged in terms of one of the others. An implication of this in terms of self-forgiveness is that the question is no longer, 'is self-forgiveness fundamentally a cheap cop-out when inter-personal forgiveness feels too difficult?' but, 'can there be some kind of intra-psychic process or dynamic that is reasonably called self-forgiveness in its own right?'. One way of framing this is by asking whether clear differences between self-forgiveness and self-acceptance can be identified.

My feeling now is that they can be. In a healthy form of self-forgiveness the subject recognises that what they did was wrong; the subject also appreciates that it has caused harm and pain and was disrespectful of those who suffered as a result; the subject therefore regrets having done it and actively seeks to put things right for the victims, resolves not to repeat the action or practice and releases themself from the emotional and cognitive experiences of guilt, self-blame, self-punishment, thereby allowing a sense of dignity and self-respect to return.

Forgiveness is the right word to use here, *not* because the subject splits itself into a good self and a bad self, with good self-forgiving the bad self in place of victim-forgiveness or divine-forgiveness. Rather it is because the intention and trajectory is to move on from a hurtful episode, or series of events, in such a way that they are acknowledged as wrong, harmful and inexcusable, but that badness of them does not over-determine the future. The point about forgiveness is that bad is overcome by good, that evil and suffering are transcended, and that a new and better future is opened up as people move away from the living hell that can be shaped *either* by the victim's resentment going toxic and becoming bitterness or hatred or leading to vengeful plans and behaviours, *or* by the perpetrator's guilt and shame becoming closed circles of misery for those who sincerely regret their actions and genuinely care about the future of their victims. Forgiveness is that which takes place, by whatever means, when the claims of both justice and mercy are honoured in the aftermath of culpable hurt and moral harm, and the 'natural' course of harm leading to more harm is averted.

It is inevitable, perhaps, that in our time the question of self-forgiveness should come into focus, while the question of divine forgiveness slips somewhat into the shade. This does, however, clarify for me that forgiveness is not one thing, but a variety of phenomena, most if not all of which can take good or not so good forms; forgiveness can be healthy or unhealthy, and may be applied wisely or foolishly. There are genuine questions of how different forms of forgiveness relate and overlap - 'forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us' will always suggest to some that victims should quickly be on the lookout for opportunities to forgive. If 'forgive' here means 'help forge a better future without condoning or excusing what has happened in the past', then there is much to be said for such a view in many cases. Although it is vitally important to accept that there are circumstances that involve manipulation, abuse of power and ongoing offending that mean that the victim is not in fact in a position to offer any helpful, healthy or transformative forgiveness and would be best advised to concentrate on their personal safety until things significantly change.

As I understand it, the imperative towards forgiveness that many find in Christian ethics is neither an obligation to do away with resentment as soon as possible after resentment is caused, nor does it give the victim the responsibility to ensure that they do not forgive unless the perpetrator repents. It is part and parcel of an overall peace-making and justice-seeking ethic that eschews personal vengeance and hatred. The corrective that this ethic needs from the victim's perspective is the acknowledgement that the paradigm of the easy forgiveness of low-level interpersonal offences really does not apply in the case of traumatic or ongoing harm. The corrective it might

need from the perpetrator's perspective is that in cases where the changed wrongdoer cannot believe that they have been forgiven objectively, they should be encouraged and helped to forgive themself.

To conclude, there is, I believe, a variety of forgiveness that can be identified and encouraged within an overall ethic of justice and mercy. I have engaged with this through the paradigm of Christian theology and practice here, but that is a matter of context rather than the limit of the range of forgiveness. As long as people believe in seeking justice and practicing mercy while pursuing peace then forgiveness will flow. If either justice or mercy lose their power to guide and motivate, and peace loses its attractiveness, then forgiveness will disappear.

Forgiveness is now an area of extensive and multidisciplinary research. My hope is that as interest grows, so researchers and practitioners will retain a sense of the value of perspectives other than their own, and that the study of forgiveness will prove to be one area where psychological, ethical and theological considerations can remain in fruitful conversation, so that genuine wisdom, adequate to the dreadful challenges of dealing with aftermath of human hurt and harm may, over time, emerge.

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[i] For instance Aurel Kolnai introduced his important paper on the subject in this way, 'Forgiveness is pre-eminently an ethical subject, and a paper written about it cannot help being a paper in Ethics. It need not therefore be sermonizing, which I wish to avoid in the highest possible measure ...' . Aurel Kolnai, A. 'Forgiveness' *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society,* 74, 1973-1974, p91.

[ii] C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (London, Fontana, 1952) p101

[iii] See Donald B Kraybill, Steven M. Nolt and David L Weaver-Zercher, *Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcends Tragedy* (San Francisco, CA: Jossy Bass, 2007)

[iv] Whether or not this activity is a form of forgiveness is moot point. The family members of the gunman were not the perpetrators and those who comforted him were not primary victims. However the force of the example is that they felt that they were obliged to engage in forgiveness-like activities and that alone makes it relevant. But there is more to consider here in terms of the argument of this lecture, which is that even if activities in the aftermath of atrocity do not fit to a precise model of forgiveness, we do not need to dismiss them as non-forgiveness. In this case the activities might reasonably be considered as forgiveness because they are definitely not retributive, but are compassionate and in different circumstances one can imagine family members of someone responsible for such an atrocity being the butt of the resentment, anger, revenge and hatred, either by association or because they believe that they must have been complicit. Of course these activities do not absolve the gunman of his crime, nor do they necessarily express the views of the surviving children, some of whom may grow up to admire these actions, but others may repudiate or resent them as they may be felt to be precipitate, or to fail to appreciate the bold damage and the psychological trauma they experienced.

[v] Charles Williams, *He Came Down From Heaven and The Forgiveness of Sins* (London, Faber and Faber, 1950)

[vi] A leading exponent of this view is Jeffrie G. Murphy, *Getting Even: Forgiveness and its Limits.* (Oxford University Press, US, 2004)

[vii] The Faith and Order Commission, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation in the Aftermath of Abuse* (London, Church House Publishing, 2017) p70

[viii] Rowan Williams and Michael Lapsley, *The Journey Towards Forgiveness: A Dialogue*. The Ecumenical Review, 66:2 p197

[ix] James Voiss, *Rethinking Christian Forgiveness: Theological, Philosophical and Psychological Explorations* (Collegeville, MI, Liturgical Press, 2015)

[x] Everett L Worthington, Jr, *Handbook of Forgiveness.* (Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 2005)

[xi] Lydia Woodyatt, Everett L. Worthington, Jr, Michale Wenzel, Brandon Griffin (Eds) *Handbook of the Psychology of Self-Forgiveness* (Cham, Switzerland, Springer International, 2017)

[xii] Stephen Cherry, *Healing Agony: Reimagining Forgiveness* (London, Continuum, 2012)

[xiii] Paul C. Vitz and Jennifer Meade *'Self-forgiveness in Psychology and Psychotherapy'*, Journal of Religion and Health, Vol. 50, No. 2 (June 2011), pp. 248-263