

Christianity: What does forgiveness mean to Christians?

Story of Jesus forgiving Peter (John 21: 1-19)

On the night of the Last Supper, Jesus told Peter that he would pretend he didn't know Jesus three times before the rooster crowed.

Jesus told the disciples they would all leave him before he died. The disciples said they would stay with him.

But, when Jesus was arrested, they all ran away.

Later, the disciples tried to find Jesus. Surrounded by Jesus' enemies, Peter was asked if he was a follower of Jesus. He said no three times.

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared before Peter again.

Jesus asked Peter if he loved him three times. Peter stated yes each time. Jesus told him, if he loved him, he would look after his people - Christians.

Peter was forgiven and went on to spread Jesus' message.



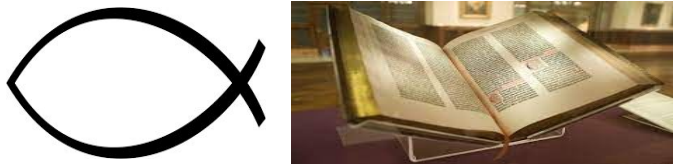
Bible extracts

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."



Artefacts and symbols

crucifix	A symbol of Jesus' life and death. Christians believe this is the ultimate example of forgiveness.
holy water	Blessed water that is believed to wash away sin and allow Christians to start a new life.
fish	This symbol represents 'Jesus being God's son and saviour'.



The Last Supper

Jesus celebrated Passover with his disciples. It was called the Last Supper because it was the last meal Jesus would eat before he died.

At the meal Jesus ate bread and drank wine and instructed his disciples to do the same in memory of him. He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup contains my blood, which is poured out for you."

While they were eating, Jesus said that one of his disciples (Judas) would betray him.

During the meal, Jesus washed the disciples' feet. The disciples didn't want Jesus to wash their feet because it was a lowly task that would usually have been performed by a servant. Jesus washed his disciples' feet to show them the importance of selfless service. It showed how he was going to be a servant for all when he was crucified.

The Eucharist is a re-enactment of the Last Supper. Someone who has been confirmed can take bread and wine in church during a special ceremony called Mass, Holy Communion or Eucharist.

Key Vocabulary

forgiveness	Stop feeling angry or resentful towards someone for a mistake that hurt you. It is a choice or decision you make.
disciple	Follower or learner.
crucifixion	A belief that Jesus died, nailed to a cross, to save Christians from their sin.
Last Supper	The final meal that Jesus shared with his disciples.
fellowship	A friendly association between people who have a shared interest.
salvation	A belief that you are saved from evil.
parable	A bible story that teaches a message.

