All Is Forgiven

Ernest Hemingway wrote a story about a father and rebellious son. The son had done wrong and, in his shame, he ran away from home. In the story the father searched all over Spain for Paco, but he couldn't find him anywhere. Finally, in Madrid, in a last desperate attempt to find his son, the father placed an ad in the daily newspaper. The advert read: "PACO, MEET AT HOTEL MONTANA NOON TUESDAY. ALL IS FORGIVEN. PAPA."

The father prayed that the boy would see the ad and maybe – just maybe – he would come to the Hotel Montana. And so, on Tuesday at noon the father arrived at Hotel Montana, and he couldn't believe his eyes. The police had been called to control the crowd of eight hundred young men all named "Paco" who had come to the hotel to meet their father. Eight hundred boys named Paco read the ad in the newspaper and hoped the message was for them. Eight hundred "Pacos" came to receive the forgiveness they so desperately needed. *

My name is "Paco." So is yours. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

The Good News (the Gospel) is that the Heavenly Father wants all "Pacos" to know that all is forgiven. The price that was paid for our salvation and forgiveness was the precious blood of Jesus, God's Son. The Apostle Peter reminded Christians of the price paid for them: "For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect" (1 Peter 1:18-19).

In order to experience the Father's forgiveness, all Pacos must come to meet Him.

God will forgive us when we place our faith and trust in Jesus (Acts 16:30-31), turn from our sins in repentance (Acts 17:30-31), confess Jesus before men (Romans 10:9-10), and are baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). He will continue to cleanse from sin those who continue to walk in the light of His word (1 John 1:7-9).

The call of the Father goes forth to all: "Paco, all is forgiven. Meet me at the cross where the debt for your sins was paid. Accept My forgiveness through your trusting obedience. Live as My child, and know that My grace will lead you to an eternal home with Me."

Come to Jesus, Paco.

-- David A. Sargent

* Information gleaned from sermon illustrations on “forgiveness” from Access Inspiration, www.accessinspiration.org.