



Forgiveness

SUNDAY, October 23, 2022

Key Scripture: Matthew 6:14-15

INTRODUCTION

This is last week in the series, "What the Bible Says." This week, our focus is on what the Bible has to say about forgiveness. Acknowledging that this is a hard topic for some of us, we learned what forgiveness is and what it isn't. Forgiveness is a kingdom perspective and it is an act of faith. It's a shift in motivation away from retaliation and avoidance towards increased goodwill for the perceived wrongdoer (Dr. Melike Fourie). Forgiveness is NOT forgetting or excusing the behavior. And it isn't necessarily fair. And as followers of Jesus, it's also NOT an option. Forgiven people forgive people.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think back to Sunday's message. What do you remember? Review your notes if you have them.
2. What is your initial reaction to the concept of forgiveness?
3. What characteristics in your life might indicate that you haven't fully forgiven past hurts, even if you know in your head what you need to do?
4. How is forgiveness an act of faith?
5. Why does unforgiveness tend to open the door for Satan to affect our lives?
6. Read Ephesians 1:7 and 2:14. According to these verses, how did God forgive you, and what was the cost? Did you deserve His forgiveness? With that in mind, is it right for you to withhold forgiveness from anyone? Are you placing your offender's debt against you at a higher level of value than the debt that Christ paid for all of your offenses against Him?
7. Can you imagine that God could have a perspective on your circumstances that you can't possibly have at this moment? Could He bring good even out of your deepest hurt? Do you believe that God loves you that much?
8. Why is forgetting the offense not a requirement of true forgiveness?
9. What can you do when struggling with emotions that contradict your choice to forgive?
10. Is forgiveness a process? Do we have to wait for complete healing? Why or why not?
11. What's one thing you learned from Sunday's message and today's discussion that will help you become a better disciple of Christ, and help others do the same?

Now What?

Begin the process today.



NOTES

Pray the **Forgiveness Prayer** (save it as your phone screen: https://www.cvchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/PrayerCard.Phone_.jpg)

Lord, I forgive _____.

Lord, I give you permission to take the judgment and bitterness out of my life.

I do not want this in my life. I surrender it to You and ask You to remove it, to heal me where I have been wounded, to forgive me where I have sinned.

I choose not to blame or hold the actions of _____ against them.

I hereby surrender my right to be paid back for my loss by _____ who has sinned against me and in doing so I declare my trust in God alone as the Righteous Judge.

Father God, bless them in every way. In Jesus' name, amen.

Digging Deeper

Consider the [Support Groups](#) Cedar Valley has that can help with your forgiveness:

PRAYER MENTORING

MARRIAGE MENTORING

Sometimes before we can begin the process of forgiving, it's helpful to take time to grieve and lament. [Prayer in the Night](#) (*Prayer in the Night: For Those Who Work or Watch or Weep* by Tish Harrison Warren, Intervarsity Press, 2021) offers insight and instruction on just this.

[Forgiving What You Can't Forget](#): Discover How to Move On, Make Peace with Painful Memories, and Create a Life That's Beautiful Again by Lysa TerKeurst, Thomas Nelson, 2020.

[ALPHA video](#) on forgiveness.