

FORGIVENESS

Introduction : Break the ice and find where we are at on the topic

As you go through life, you're bound to be hurt by other people. It is your choice to react to that hurt in a forgiving or resentful way.

Question: Why do you think it is hard for us to forgive others?

- Examples: Bitterness, resentment, pride, wanting people to be in debt to us, apathy, fear people will hurt us again, pain, etc.

Question: Can you think of an example in your life where someone hurt you and it was hard to forgive them? What happened to that relationship?

Question: Have you ever found it hard to ask for forgiveness? (Yes) Why?

- Examples: Shame, guilt, disobedience, pride, etc.

Main Content: Why does this matter

Let's jump into Scripture to see why forgiveness is important:

Read Matthew 18:21-35 - Unforgiving servant parable.

- Note: Here is a rough estimate of the amount of money referred to in this passage.
 - Ten thousand talents = \$3.48 billion dollars
 - One hundred denarii = \$11,000 (four months wages)

Question: How did the servant's attitude change before and after he had received forgiveness?

Question: What happened to the first servant because of his attitude towards the other servant?

- He got thrown in jail, tortured, pain, and retribution.

God forgives us for everything we've done, yet we have trouble letting go of one sin someone commits against us. We want justice whenever we get wronged, but forgiveness whenever we make mistakes.

We know that Jesus calls us to forgive, but why?

Question: What would be the result of living in a world where forgiveness didn't exist?

- Because people make mistakes, unforgiveness destroys relationship



Matthew 6:14-15

- If you don't forgive others, God won't forgive you

Matthew 18: 21-22

Ephesians 4:32

When we don't forgive, it can lead to bitterness.

Hebrews 12:15

Unforgiveness is the poison pill we swallow, hoping that the other person will die

Bitterness is what happens to someone who chooses to keep track of people's wrongs rather than forgive them for their mistakes.

Boundaries of forgiveness

We know that there is no bounds to how much you should forgive someone, but should your relationship with that person change or stay the same if there's a repeated pattern of them hurting you and you forgiving them?

You should forgive people, but this doesn't mean they can walk all over you. There need to be boundaries in this forgiveness. Trust doesn't need to be restored right away like it does with forgiveness. *Trust is earned not given, but forgiveness is given not earned.*

Conclusion

How can we forgive others?

- Prayer, putting yourself in the other person's shoes, reflecting on your own sin, and talking to a mentor
- Forgiveness isn't always a feeling, but a choice to no longer hold things against people.

Matthew 7:3-5 - Speck in their eye, log in yours.

To end, let's go over the forgiveness checklist and start the process of forgiveness towards people/groups that we've been harboring bitterness towards.

Notes: Use this as a tool or reference. Feel Free to add or subtract from it as needed!

