

## 205 - Forgiveness

### I. Introduction

#### A. The Power of Forgiveness

One of the central purposes of the cross was for forgiveness. Guilt is probably the largest cause of sleeplessness, stress related illnesses, and anxiety. One Christian doctor said that, "85% of my patients could leave the hospital if they only knew they were forgiven".

#### B. Reconciliation and Forgiveness

II Cor. 5:18-20 describes the process of reconciliation beginning with God towards man and then through man towards God. *"Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, **not counting their trespasses against them**, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, **as though God were making an appeal through us**; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."*

#### C. Forgiveness is \_\_\_\_\_ always reconciliation

Reconciliation is often \_\_\_\_\_

### II. Forgiveness

#### A. Dictionary

#### B. Scriptural Definition

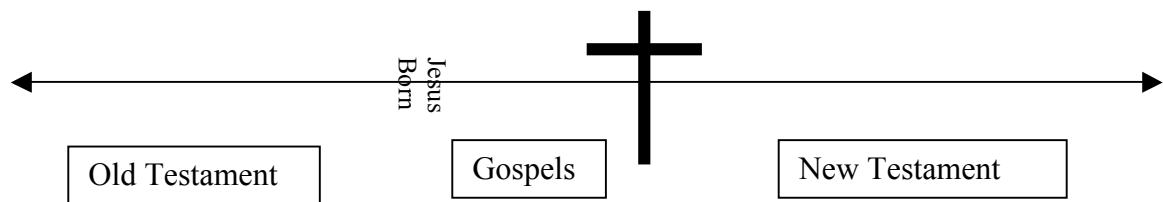
1. Old Testament

1. New Testament

#### C. Colossians 2:13,14

### III. Basis of Forgiveness

#### A. Rightly Dividing the Word



#### B. Forgiveness Taught \_\_\_\_\_ The Cross

#### C. Forgiveness Taught \_\_\_\_\_ The Cross

### IV. Aspects of Forgiveness

#### A. Who Should You Forgive?

#### B. What Should You Forgive?

#### C. Why Should You Forgive?

#### D. When Should You Forgive?

#### E. Where Should You Forgive?

## **V. The Application of Forgiveness**

### **A. Forgiveness Exercises**

1. The Empty Chair
2. Balloon Method (The Confident Woman)
3. The Cross and Nails

### **B. Deceptions Concerning Forgiveness**

Forgiveness is not:

- Not feeling angry any more.
- Justifying, rationalizing or explaining away one's rejecting behavior.
- Letting the passage of time take care of the hurt.
- Forgetting.
- Asking God to forgive them through me.
- Denying or acting as if it never happened or didn't hurt.
- Asking them to forgive you.
- Being reconciled or restored to a proper relationship.
- Forgiving the offender face to face.
- Baking a cake, being nice, or turning the other cheek.

### **Forgiveness is a CHOICE!**

### **C. Results of Forgiveness**

### **D. Reasons Why People Do Not, Will Not Forgive**

- Don't want to give up anger because it keeps a person from feeling hurt.
- An excuse for not having a relationship with someone.
- An excuse for their present behavior and feelings.
- The offense was too great.
- They don't see that they offended me.

- They are not sorry.
- They never asked to be forgiven.
- I'll forgive if they promise to never do it again.
- They did it deliberately.
- If I forgive them, they will win.
- Someone has to punish them.
- Something keeps me from forgiving. I just can't.
- I will be a hypocrite if I forgive them because I don't feel like forgiving.
- I will forgive, but I will not forget.
- They haven't stopped doing what hurts me.

## **VI. Walking In Forgiveness**

**A. How do we deal with \_\_\_\_\_ offenses?**

**B. What if the person never \_\_\_\_\_?**

**C. What if my feelings don't \_\_\_\_\_?**



## Forgiving Correctly

1. What are the consequences of unresolved hurt and anger?  
(hurt – anger – coping mechanisms or flesh)
  2. Unresolved hurt and anger may lead to many types of defenses such as:  
Compulsive work, perfectionism, superficial relationships, critical attitude, avoiding, bad habits, busyness, humor, repressed feelings, self-pity, etc...
  3. Is anger a valid emotion for a Christian to have?  
According to Ephesians 4:26, yes...getting in touch with it is the first step
  4. What are we commanded NOT to do with our anger?  
According to Ephesians 4:26-27, go to bed on it, leave unresolved, and let it lead to sin
  5. What are we to do with our anger?  
According to Ephesians 4:31 and Colossians 3:8, we are to put it away or cast it off
  6. What are we called to do? And who is our standard or example to follow?  
According to Ephesians 4:32 and Colossians 3:12-13, we are to walk in love, kindness, and forgive those who have hurt us just as Christ forgave us.
  7. How did God forgive us?  
According to Colossians 2:12-14, totally and completely, He cancelled the debt against us
  8. What happens to our offenses when we are forgiven by God?  
According to Psalm 103:12, Isaiah 43:25, and Jeremiah 31:34, He removes them, He remembers them no more, He does not remind us of it anymore, and it is finished.
  9. Forgiveness is not...
    - Not feeling angry any more.
    - Justifying, rationalizing or explaining away one's rejecting behavior.
    - Letting the passage of time take care of the hurt.
    - Forgetting.
    - Asking God to forgive them through me.
    - Denying or acting as if it never happened or didn't hurt.
    - Asking them to forgive you.
    - Being reconciled or restored to a proper relationship.
    - Forgiving the offender face to face.
    - Baking a cake, being nice, or turning the other cheek.
- **Forgiveness is an act of my will, a choice!**

10. Read Matthew 18:21-35, a parable Jesus taught on forgiveness and list important aspects of forgiveness:

- Forgiveness is a gift we do not deserve
- Forgiveness is canceling the debt owed
- Forgiveness is received from God as a gift and to be passed on to others
- Forgiveness is freedom from personal torture and inner torment

11. What is involved in forgiving someone?

- Try a forgiveness exercise along with these steps
- Acknowledge the hurt
- Acknowledge how it made you feel
- Release the person
- Accept the person unconditionally
- Be willing to be hurt again

12. Walking in Forgiveness

- What if the person hurts me again? Keep accounts at zero
- What if the person never changes? God's problem
- What if I forgive and my feelings don't change? God's problem

Forgiveness Exercise

Write down the person, event and how you felt during the deepest hurts of your life. Then, choose to forgive each one by walking through steps in #11.

Name	Event	How I felt

## **Bibliography**

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