

The Model Church: Forgiveness - Part 3

Matthew 18:23-35

MAIN IDEAS - Forgiveness is not optional it's a command - Just do it.

1. Love God
2. Look Inward
 - a. Own Your Stuff
 - b. Be Specific
 - c. Recognize It For What God Says It Is.
3. Let It Go
 - a. Cancel the Debt
 - b. Reconcile
4. Love Them

In John 14:15-17, Jesus begins this passage with the word “IF.” What does the word “if” imply? What’s the connection between our love for God, our obedience to His Word and the Holy Spirit?

It’s human nature to see the fault or error in others while being blind to the condition of our own hearts. In what ways does this make us hypocrites? How does Jesus’ command in Matt. 7:3-5 take us from hypocrite to humble saint?

Genesis 50:15-21 gives another perspective on situations that could muster anger, resentment and retaliation. How does thinking beyond a person who has offended you to God who uses all things for our sakes (2 Cor.4:15) change how you view adversity and offenses?

In Matthew 5:43-45, Jesus follows up his command to love your enemies with another command to pray for them. What reason does he give for doing this?

PERSONAL RESPONSE

Forgiveness is both a choice and a process; first we choose to forgive and then our minds and emotions need time to catch up with our choice. Often, we are weak to follow through. God helps us in our weakness (2 Cor. 12:9-10).

- Make a mental list of what your forgiveness cost Christ and compare it to what forgiving others would cost you.
- Pray that the power of Christ may rest upon you giving your heart genuine forgiveness for one who has wronged you.
- Examine your own actions and heart attitude
- Journal your forgiveness journey in honesty.
 - Acknowledge your brokenness.
 - Confess your fears of letting go (control, letting the offender off the hook, trusting God in the process and with the outcome)
 - Take an inventory of your role and responsibility in the situation
 - Do you need to go first, confess and ask for forgiveness for any ungodly response to being wronged
- Pray for true and complete healing
- Love those who have offended you by praying for them

REPRODUCE

Sharing your journey of forgiveness (frailties, strengths, victories and struggles) encourages others to choose forgiveness. Your vulnerability could be a vehicle for someone else's victory.

Be willing to:

- Listen to someone who is struggling with unforgiveness
- Speak truth in love (Ephesians 4:15)
- Share your own imperfect journey of forgiveness
- Pray with and for that person
- Check in with that person

KEY VERSES

From the Sermon and Study:

- Matthew 18:23-35
- Matthew 7:3-5
- Psalm 103:12
- John 13:34-35
- John 14:15-17
- Genesis 50:15-21
- Jeremiah 31:34
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Ephesians 4:15, 31- 32
- James 1:2-5
- 1 John 1:9
- 2 Cor.4:15, 12:9-10