



Part 3: It's All About Forgiveness

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November 15 & 16, 2008

Our example of forgiveness:

Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."
– *Luke 23:34*

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. – *Romans 5:8*

Truth: Jesus forgave completely and preemptively.

Our standard of forgiveness:

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the LORD forgave you. – *Colossians 3:13*

Truth: The followers of Jesus are called to freely offer what they have freely received.

Our ministry of forgiveness:

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. – *2 Corinthians 5: 18-19*

Truth: Forgiveness is our spiritual work and privilege.

Our reality of forgiveness:

Forgiveness **is not**:
Forgetting
Diminishing
Overlooking
Denying
Condoning
Momentary and instantaneous

Forgiveness **is**:
Releasing a person from our judgment
Choosing not to punish
Refusing to harbor an offense
Giving mercy when none is deserved
Setting free our offender... and ourselves

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Our opportunity for forgiveness:

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. - *Galatians 6:1-2*

Next Steps

- Have an honest moment with God – right now – Is there anyone you need to forgive? Have you been harboring anger? Are you ready to release it into God's care and forgive as He forgave you?
- Attend the Family Dynamics Workshop to work through confession and forgiveness issues with those who are the closest to you.

On your way home:

Is there someone you need to confess to OR forgive? Use the drive home to ask God to bring to mind any unfinished business you have with Him or another person.

Small Group Discussion Questions



- 1) What troubles you the most about the topics of confession and forgiveness? Why do you think these topics are easy to talk about but so hard to do?
- 2) What do you think are the personal consequences for withholding forgiveness?
- 3) What else would you add to the list of what forgiveness is not? This is a great opportunity to bring the Bible into your discussion. Make sure you can back up what you say with scripture.
- 4) Read Galatians 6:1-2 again. What does it mean to watch yourself in the process of restoration and forgiveness? What should we be watching for?
- 5) Is there anything you need to confess to your group so that they can pray for you and you can be healed? (James 5:16)
- 6) How can we pray for you tonight?