

Sunday, June 23rd, 2024
1000 Oaks Bible Church

Cultivating Healthy Relationships:
“Forgiveness”

*** INTRODUCTION**

A. When another does you wrong it hurts, we feel disappointed and betrayed. Imagine how Jesus felt when Judas betrayed Him with a kiss. Or how He felt when He saw Peter deny being a follower 3 times.

**B. But biblical Forgiveness is capable of almost impossible effect. It frees the offender and the offended. One example:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2_OOaP763k**

I. WHY IS FORGIVENESS SO DIFFICULT?

A. It is difficult because people so rarely admit they are wrong and need to be forgiven. A child does not admit their wrong because they are only thinking about Consequences not Restoration. Parents are not as concerned about working through Forgiveness as just restoring peace and quiet.

B. People often misunderstand what Forgiveness is. Forgiveness is not the same as condoning the action, excusing it, or saying it's all right. It's not the same as foregoing justice. There can be forgiveness but still have appropriate consequences.

C. Some people face abuse, violence, loss and can have a huge burden of resentment toward another person - makes forgiveness difficult.

D. When we are unwilling to forgive, we carry around with us heavy, unresolved emotions. If I hold unforgiveness against another person that is like me swallowing poison and waiting for the other person to die.

II. THE EXAMPLE OF JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

A. Joseph and his brothers grew up in a dysfunctional marriage; the father had marriage issues and there was tension among the brothers from different mothers. 10 brothers were united in their jealousy and hostility toward their younger brother, Joseph.

B. The 10 brothers hatch a plan to sell Joseph to a traveling slave trader from a distant country - Egypt. They tell their father that Joseph was killed by a wild animal.

C. Joseph spent 13 years in prison or bondage but then for 7 years gained favor with Pharaoh and becomes 2nd in command in all Egypt.

D. Eventually a famine requires the 10 brothers to come to Egypt to buy grain - not realizing their brother is now “Vice President.” Finally, Joseph reveals himself to his brothers in a powerful, emotional moment. Exodus 45:2 **Then he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard about it.**

E. His brothers understand Joseph could have them all slaughtered instantly and they are terrified. But look at the Forgiveness that Joseph offers in Genesis 45:5 **Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to save lives.**

F. Do you see why Joseph was able to forgive his brothers, despite their horrible wrongdoing against him?

Seeing God's plan.

G. Deep wounds such as rape, incest, abuse, criminal offenses take more than human forgiveness to heal. God is the one who can give beauty for ashes, joy for sorrow, peace for heartache. He can take those things that have happened against you to then restore you.

III. FORGIVENESS AS PART OF HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

A. The example of Jesus on the Cross - Luke 23:24

B. Matthew 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

C. Proverbs 19:11 A person's wisdom has made him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.

D. Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

E. Colossians 3:12-13 ...put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the LORD forgave you, so must you do also.

F. People can hurt you, but you are not what has been done to you.

You can forgive and walk in the grace and peace of Jesus. Forgiveness is not a single *Act*, it is an ongoing *Attitude*. When you resent a person you make their impact Oppressive, When you forgive you make their Impact Obsolete.

You MUST forgive.

* CURBSIDE

A. Close by reminding you of the greatest act of Forgiveness ever done - Jesus going to die on the Cross giving each of us the individual right and responsibility to receive Him as Savior by forgiving our sins.

B. Remember the areas you have made mistakes, where you have failed, where you have sinned... it all gets cleansed by the power of His blood.

C. Joseph said in Genesis 50:19-20 But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in God’s place?”

20 As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to keep many people alive.

D. Is there a person you need to forgive? - Even if they don't seem to deserve it? We are not given the option to decide IF to forgive. We MUST forgive!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxoMbPWuk0I>