

Spring Valley Baptist Church

September 26, 2021

THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 18:21-22; 6:14-15

What is Forgiveness?

Wikipedia: *Forgiveness is the renunciation or cessation of resentment, indignation or anger as a result of an actual or perceived offense, disagreement, or mistake, or ceasing to demand punishment or restitution.*

The Oxford English Dictionary: *to grant free pardon and to give up all claim on account of an offense or debt.*

My definition: *Forgiveness is giving up your right to retaliate, and reaching out in love to the one who offended me.*

What is the origin of forgiveness? GOD is! (See Gen. 3:15)

Forgiveness does not: _____ or _____ the sin.
_____ the seriousness of the offense.
_____ the consequences.

Forgiveness does: _____ sin, SIN

Forgiveness does _____ the offender accountable for his or her actions.

Forgiveness say's: *"You hurt me, and what you did was wrong, but I will not hold it against you, I will not try to get back at you, and I will not hate you for it."*

Note: *God will never command's us to do anything that He doesn't empower us to do through the Holy Spirit.*

God is our Model: Our forgiveness _____ God's forgiveness. (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12-13)

God is ready to Forgive: Forgiveness is a _____ to our _____ (Ps. 86:5; 1Jn 1:9)

Forgiveness demonstrates _____ love (Rom. 5:8)

Four Greek words for love in the Bible: "Philia"-brotherly love or friendship love, "Eros"- physical or sexual love (erotic), "Storge" – natural affection, family love, "Agape" – Godly, unconditional love.

Forgiveness is an act of _____

Forgiveness _____ our obedience to, and love for God. (Jn 13:34-35, 14:15, 15:10)

Forgiveness is _____ to this world.

- The world _____, but never settles anything
- An apology accompanied by a request for forgiveness opens the door for _____

What is the Goal of Forgiveness?

- The goal of forgiveness is always the same- _____
- We must seek reconciliation with _____ and with _____
- The first goal of forgiveness is always to bring us back into fellowship with God and one another, and to re-establish _____. (Matt. 5:23-24)
- We must also seek reconciliation with _____. (Rom. 12:17-21)

CONCLUSION: The take-away

- Forgiveness for the believer is **not optional**
- Forgiveness does not **negate consequences**
- When you forgive someone **it's not always possible to have a relationship with them.** (*They may have already passed away, or they may not want to make peace with you.*)
- Forgiveness is an **act of grace.** (*When we forgive someone we are acting like Jesus. We are giving them undeserved favor just like Jesus gave to us.*)
- Emotions **follow** actions. (*You may not feel like forgiving. Forgiving is hard, but when we're obedient to God's command, he will help our emotions to heal in time.*)
- God is **our model** for forgiving others. (WDJS? Matt. 6:14-15)
- God is **ready** to forgive you. (You must ask – you must repent)
- Forgiveness **demonstrates** Agape love.
- Forgiveness **confirms** our obedience to, and love for God. (*It also proves the authenticity of your salvation*)
- Forgiveness **opens the door** for reconciliation. (*Forgiveness happens immediately, reconciliation is a process*).

The Excuses we make for not forgiving:

- I don't want to be a hypocrite.
- When I see fruit, then I'll forgive
- I need more faith. I just can't do it. You don't know how deeply I've been hurt.
- When my emotions and memories heal, then I'll forgive.

Friend, if you refuse to forgive, you cut yourself off from God. He doesn't hear your prayers, He doesn't bless you, and you set yourself up to be disciplined by Him. Until you repent of your sin of disobedience, you are separated from God and from His protection. Your rebellion presents a bad witness to the world (*we are ambassadors for Christ*). Your rebellion hinders your church from accomplishing her mission. You set a bad example for your children, and you bring shame upon the name of Christ. And by the way, it has been proven that harboring un-forgiveness, anger, and bitterness can lead to physical, physiological, and emotional conditions that could result in cardiac arrest and even death.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

If you would like to talk more about how to move forward with forgiving or seek forgiveness, please don't hesitate to speak with me following the service. You may also reach my cell at (410) 707-7614 or email at mdowell1@verizon.net

Blessings,

Pastor Mitch