

“Forgiveness: Extending Grace”

Rev. Dr. Joe Scruggs, Senior Pastor
November 25, 2012

- Hurt is part of living in a broken world
- It is vital that we learn how to constructively overcome the “hurt”
- “World’s” approaches

The Christian approach is harder, but so much better. It calls for forgiveness.

“What does true forgiveness really mean? How is your heart supposed to feel in situations like infidelity and other tough relationship issues?”

- It feels bad and we need to acknowledge that.
- The complicated part is to not be _____ by those painful emotions.

Key Clarification #1 - When we sin against God, we wrong other people.

- Psalms 51:1-4
- God was the law giver and whenever we violate God’s law, _____ happens somewhere.
- Romans 3:19-24
- Very important distinction-God can _____, wipe the slate clean.

Key Clarification #2 - We forgive because Jesus commanded it.

- Matthew 18:21-35

Forgiveness is not . . .

- a _____
- pretending you weren’t hurt
- saying what the other person did was okay
- _____
- _____ and it does not mean we have to _____ somebody again
- relieving someone of their responsibility. Galatians 6:7-10
- _____

Forgiveness is . . . “a decision I make to obey God and to walk, as a lifestyle, in a higher realm by not allowing someone else’s actions or attitudes to dictate my actions or choices.” - Doug Easterday

- a decision (to begin the process of letting go)
- a decision I make (no one can make that choice for you)
- obeying God (forgiveness is about _____)
- walking in a higher realm (a Kingdom of God realm)

Forgiveness is not an event, it is a life-style process that takes time.

The process involves:

- _____ something “bad” happened
- coming to grips with the emotions associated with that event
- being willing to enter into the process of _____ (might require help)
- _____ daily and _____ on God
- (possibly) setting new _____

When we forgive, we don’t generate grace, we simply extend the grace we have received.

Talking through the ideas presented in Sunday's message helps us apply God's word to our individual lives. These questions and thoughts are designed to help you put His words into action in your life this week. We encourage you to talk these over with other Christians that you are close to.

How have you defined forgiveness in the past? How does that description fit with the one we have talked about today?

What is the biggest obstacle you have to overcome as you have been called on to forgive someone?

Do you think Jesus was being unrealistic or unreasonable in making such strong statements about the necessity of forgiveness?

Who ultimately benefits from our willingness to forgive?

Do you have a lot of "emotional leftovers" in your "refrigerator"? How have you been dealing with those? Has it been working? Have you come to peace with past hurts?

Review the scriptures presented in this week's sermon and think about what God might be teaching you? (Note: these might be different than what was presented in the sermon.)

What is your main "take-away" from this week? How do you plan to live that out?

Frequently Asked Questions

