

LUKE 17:3-4

3So watch yourselves, "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. 4If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him."

LEVITICUS 19:18

" 'Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

PROVERBS 19:11

A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.

ISAIAH 53:7

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

HEBREWS 12:2-3

2Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

EPHESIANS 4:32

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

MATTHEW 5:43-45

43"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor[a] and hate your enemy.' 44But I tell you: Love your enemies[b] and pray for those who persecute you, 45that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

PROVERBS 25:21-22

21 If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. 22 In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head, and the LORD will reward you.

MATTHEW 5:7

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

MATTHEW 6:14-15

14For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.



## Our Hope...

...is that we should forgive others.



# Fresh Choice

## PASTOR DOUGLAS ESTES

### How Do We Forgive Others?

A willful choice to no longer resent wrongs.

A restoration of previous relationship.

### Why Should We Forgive Others?

So We Will Have Better Relationships.

So We Will Be Worthy of our Title.

So We Will Receive Rewards from God.

So We Will Be Free.



*"As Christians we "say" we forgive people but what we actually do is intellectually forget about it. That's not true, biblical forgiveness."*

-PASTOR DOUGLAS

## LifeGroup Moment:

How and why should we practice forgiveness?

## Discussion

"How do you want God to act in your lives?"

-PASTOR DOUGLAS

Read Luke 17:3-4. Is forgiving someone primarily for you or for them? What does it mean to "rebuke?" (The term here is the Greek "epitimao" which means "to show honor, to honor, or admonish." There are other terms that are meant to be a harsh rebuke.) How do you take constructive criticism? In your relationships with your Christian brothers/sisters are we "too forgiving" in that we are unwilling to rebuke them lovingly for their sin? Do we immediately forgive wrong doing without encouraging repentance? What do you think about the "if" in this passage? As far as relationships are concerned, is it important that the other person acknowledge their fault in order to receive forgiveness? Read Leviticus 19:18. Who is your "neighbor?" The Pharisees interpreted a "neighbor" as someone who was of the same nationality and faith. Read Matthew 5:43-45. Jesus is quoting Leviticus and explaining the true meaning of the verse.

What happens to our heart (and our life) when we hate our enemies? What happens to our heart (and our life) when we love our enemies? What does "loving your enemies" look like? If I forgive someone, does that mean that I condone their actions?

On Sunday Pastor Douglas talked about two things we must do in order to truly forgive others; to choose to no longer resent their wrongs and to restore the previous relationship. Do you agree with these things? Is it always necessary to restore the former relationship? What if someone continually sins against you, according to Luke 17, are we required to continually restore the relationship to the place it was before?

Read Proverbs 19:11. Why does this scripture say we should forgive? Have you ever been offended? How is your typical response to being offended? How does this verse in Proverbs say we should react? (Patience). Do you ever find yourself saying something back when you are offended, something that you'd be ashamed to have Christ hear you say? Read Isaiah 53:7. There are times when it is valuable to be silent, to say nothing. The first reason Pastor Douglas brought up as a reason for us to forgive was so that we can have better relationships.

Read Hebrews 12:2-3. What do these verses tell us to do? (Look beyond the situation!) Read Proverbs 25:21-22. What do these verses tell us to do when someone offends us?

Read Ephesians 4:32. How does this verse tell us to react to one another? What should be on our mind as we forgive others? (Christ's forgiveness of us.) Is it possible NOT to forgive if we truly remember Christ's perfect example and how He's forgiven us countless times? What "petty" things are you not forgiving others for? From an "eternal" viewpoint aren't ALL earthly things "petty?"

The next reason PD gives is that we are to forgive to be worthy of our "title." Read Matthew 5:43-45. Note that it says that we must do this "that" we may be called sons of your Father. It's a requirement!

PD also talked about the rewards we receive from forgiving others. What is the #1 reward we receive when we forgive others? Read Matthew 6:14-15.

Corrie Ten Boom, a Christian woman who survived a Nazi concentration camp during the Holocaust, said, "Forgiveness is to set a prisoner free, and to realize the prisoner was you." What does she mean? How does forgiveness free not only the person who forgives but also the person who needed forgiveness? What about justice? What about wanting someone to "pay" for what they've done? Is that allowed with true forgiveness? Read Luke 6:37. What does this verse have to say about the situation? Why is it when we are wronged we want "justice" but when we wrong others we want "mercy?"

In John 8:36 it says that "if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." If God sets the example for us by forgiving us completely and totally each time we sin against Him, who are we to withhold forgiveness from those who offend us?

\*\*Make sure to spend some time with your LG talking about what/how you are going to support Project Easter 2010!