



Notes | August 18, 2024

As it is in Heaven: Forgiveness

How forgiveness is handled in the Kingdom is different than how it's handled outside the Kingdom. We know the Kingdom of God has a King, a culture, and a calendar, but it also has a code. The world's code tells us to "get even." But the Kingdom Code of Conduct instructs us to approach life differently. For followers of Jesus, the Kingdom Code that governs relationships is forgiveness. But sometimes forgiveness can be complicated. We need to forgive, and we need to be forgiven.

Key Scripture | Matthew 6:9-15

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you don't forgive others their sins your Father will not forgive your sins.

Related Scriptures

Luke 23:34; Romans 12:19; Romans 12:17a; Proverbs 24:17-18; Matthew 5:43-44; Romans 12:18; Luke 6:27-28; Peter 3:8-9; Matthew 18:32-35

Icebreakers:

Q: What's your favorite fall activity?



Key Thoughts and Reflections:

I. Forgiveness is an act of “Obedient Love”: a Decision to Absorb the loss.

Q: What does “forgiveness starts and ends with Jesus” mean to you? Does this perspective change your view on forgiveness?

Q: Have you experienced a time where you needed to distinguish between the decision to forgive vs. being led by our emotions?

Q: Talk about a time you had to “absorb a loss” instead of “wallowing in that loss.” How did that impact your spiritual growth?

II. Forgiveness is Resisting Revenge, Releasing Hurt and Refusing to celebrate misfortune.

Q: How do you transfer the desire for revenge to God? What challenges have you faced in living in the Kingdom Code of forgiveness vs. the world’s code of “get even?”

Q: What are some practical steps we can take to release hurt instead of rehearsing it?

Q: Why is it important to refuse to celebrate someone’s misfortune, even when they’ve wronged us? How does this decision shape our character?

III. Forgiveness is Being at Peace, Blessing Others and Praying for their Good.

Q: What does it mean to be at peace with someone “as much as it depends on you?” How do you balance that with maintaining healthy boundaries?

Q: How can we actively bless those who hurt us? Share an experience where you chose to bless rather than curse someone who wronged you.

Q: Have you ever experienced a situation when praying for someone changed your heart towards them? How did that deepen your relationship with God?



Get Practical

This week, on your own or with your group, take some time to participate in the “forgiveness challenge.”

1. Begin by identifying someone you need to forgive. Spend time in prayer, asking Jesus to guide your heart and mind towards forgiveness, remembering that it starts and ends with Him.
2. Make a deliberate choice to forgive, recognizing that this is more about obedience to God than aligning with your emotions. Write down your decision as a commitment to yourself and God.
3. Actively resist any revenge or holding onto hurt. Each time thoughts of hurt or revenge arise, practice replacing them with a prayer for the person's good and a declaration of releasing them to God.
4. When you're ready, take a step towards blessing the person who wronged you. This could be through a kind gesture or praying for their wellbeing. Seek ways to express this blessing in a way that is meaningful and sincere.
5. After some time, reflect on the impact this process has had on your heart, your relationship with God, and your peace of mind. Share your experience with a trusted friend or with your group to encourage others on their forgiveness journey.