

Let It Go! **Why Only A Fool Refuses To Forgive**

THE PARABLE

Matthew 18:21-35

WHY ONLY A FOOL REFUSES TO FORGIVE

(1) Forgiving is a BIG DEAL, a VERY BIG DEAL!

Matthew 18:32-35 Matthew 6:9-14 & Luke 11:1-4 Luke 6:37-38 Ephesians 4:30-32

(2) Forgiving IS NOT...

✓ FORGETTING

Psalm 103:11-12 & Micah 7:19 Jeremiah 31:34 Hebrews 8:12 Genesis 8:1

✓ REMOVING ALL THE CONSEQUENCES

2 Samuel 12:13-14 Jeremiah 18:1-8

✓ TRUSTING AGAIN

Proverbs 14:15

(3) Forgiving IS...

✓ REFUSING TO SEEK MY OWN REVENGE

1 Peter 2:21-23 Romans 12:17-21 Romans 13:4

✓ REFUSING TO BE CONSUMED BY THE PAST

Ephesians 4:30-32 Proverbs 19:11

✓ Giving to others what

GOD HAS ALREADY GIVEN TO ME

Matthew 18:21-35 Colossians 3:13 Luke 17:3-5

LEARNING TO FORGIVE

Some Practical Tips

Growth Group Homework

For the week of October 2, 2016

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Of all our senses, smell seems to be the one that is best at bringing back memories. Our sense of smell has the ability to instantaneously trigger memories of events, places or people from our past. Can you think of one or two smells that trigger good memories of your childhood?

2. Everyone struggles at one time or another with forgiving someone. Since this struggle seems to be a universal experience, why do you think people find it so hard to forgive others?

3. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Remembering our need for forgiveness and God's incredible provision of it will undoubtedly help us become more generous in our forgiveness of others. The following verses take us back to the basics of God's forgiveness. How could each passage help you grow in your ability or motivation to forgive someone else?

Isaiah 1:18 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹⁸ "Come now, let us settle the matter,"
says the LORD.

"Though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red as crimson,
they shall be like wool.

Isaiah 53:6 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 59:1-3 *New International Version (NIV)*

Sin, Confession and Redemption

¹ Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save,
nor his ear too dull to hear.

² But your iniquities have separated
you from your God;
your sins have hidden his face from you,
so that he will not hear.

³ For your hands are stained with blood,
your fingers with guilt.

Your lips have spoken falsely,
and your tongue mutters wicked things.

Colossians 2:13-14 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,¹⁴ having canceled the charge of our legal

indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.

How could these passages shape your understanding of what it means to “Forgive as the Lord forgave you?” (Colossians 3:12)

Colossians 3:12 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹² Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

2. We heard this weekend that we are not to seek our own revenge. That’s easy to say, but hard to do because it can leave us feeling like the other person is getting away with something. In the following verses, what can we learn from David about not seeking our own revenge and allowing God’s justice to happen?

1 Samuel 24:1-13 *New International Version (NIV)*

David Spares Saul’s Life

¹ After Saul returned from pursuing the Philistines, he was told, “David is in the Desert of En Gedi.” ² So Saul took three thousand able young men from all Israel and set out to look for David and his men near the Crags of the Wild Goats.

³ He came to the sheep pens along the way; a cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself. David and his men were far back in the cave. ⁴ The men said, “This is the day the LORD spoke of when he said to you, ‘I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.’” Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul’s robe.

⁵ Afterward, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe. ⁶ He said to his men, “The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing to my master, the LORD’s anointed, or lay my hand on him; for he is the anointed of the LORD.” ⁷ With these words David sharply rebuked his men and did not allow them to attack Saul. And Saul left the cave and went his way.

⁸ Then David went out of the cave and called out to Saul, “My lord the king!” When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground. ⁹ He said to Saul, “Why do you listen when men say, ‘David is bent on harming you?’ ¹⁰ This day you have seen with your own eyes how the LORD delivered you into my hands in the cave. Some urged me to kill you, but I spared you; I said, ‘I will not lay my hand on my lord, because he is the LORD’s anointed.’ ¹¹ See, my father, look at this piece of your robe in my hand! I cut off the corner of your robe but did not kill you. See that there is nothing in my hand to indicate that I am guilty of wrongdoing or rebellion. I have not wronged you, but you are hunting me down to take my life. ¹² May the LORD judge between you and me. And may the LORD avenge the wrongs you have done to me, but my hand will not touch you. ¹³ As the old saying goes, ‘From evildoers come evil deeds,’ so my hand will not touch you.

Psalm 139:17-24 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts, God!

 How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸ Were I to count them,

- they would outnumber the grains of sand—
when I awake, I am still with you.
- ¹⁹ If only you, God, would slay the wicked!
 Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty!
- ²⁰ They speak of you with evil intent;
 your adversaries misuse your name.
- ²¹ Do I not hate those who hate you, LORD,
 and abhor those who are in rebellion against you?
- ²² I have nothing but hatred for them;
 I count them my enemies.
- ²³ Search me, God, and know my heart;
 test me and know my anxious thoughts.
- ²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me,
 and lead me in the way everlasting.

What is the most challenging aspect for you when it comes to not seeking your own revenge?

The best way to avoid seeking revenge is to forgive. What are some signs that suggest a person may not have forgiven someone? What are signs that suggest a person has forgiven someone?

- 3.** We heard this weekend that our response to someone who has wronged us is to forgive them (and when appropriate, seek justice). While forgiveness is always the most important response we can have, the Bible mentions some other actions we may want to take toward them. In the following verses, identify when we're supposed to get involved with others and how we're supposed to relate to them.

Matthew 18:15 *New International Version (NIV)*

Dealing With Sin in the Church

¹⁵ "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.

Matthew 5:23-24 *New International Version (NIV)*

²³ "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you,²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

Our motives are an important part of this process. What are some good motives you can think of for getting involved in this way with others? What are some wrong motives for involvement?

How could Matthew 7:3-5 help us with our attitude when we're dealing with someone who has wronged us?

Matthew 7:3-5 *New International Version (NIV)*

³ "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

TAKING IT HOME

1. Are there any past hurts or injustices that continue to trip you up or bog you down? If so, how does the sermon speak to that situation?
 2. As you review the three statements Larry gave to help us understand what forgiving means, which one is the most challenging for you to follow (and why)?

Prayer Requests:



REAL MAN WEEKEND – “The Palomar Experience” - Oct. 28-30

 Lookin' for some crazy guy stuff to do? Want to kick back or get refocused on God? Join us for another epic man's weekend that will get you recharged and refreshed as a man following God. The weekend will also include plenty of man event options like paintball, high ropes course, skeet shooting, archery, zipline, horseback riding, etc. Register online at northcoastchurch.com/real-man-weekend.

* **The Smart Step-Family Class** - learn how to navigate life within a blended family. Mondays, Oct.10 – Nov. 7 (4 weeks), 6:30-9pm. For more information and to register, go to northcoastchurch.com/classes.