

Learning to Forgive, Part 1

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I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Matthew 18:21-35.
- B. We are to be forgiven like children.
- C. There is a great deal of tolerance with children. We are still growing.
- D. Man is at his best in his ability to forgive because it is basic to God. (Proverbs 19:11, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13)
- E. We ought to learn to forgive because people are going to need it.
- F. A discussion on forgiveness naturally follows a discussion on discipline. (2 Corinthians 2:6)

II. The inquiry into forgiveness.

- A. The question Peter raises is whether forgiveness has a limit.
- B. We are to hold nothing against someone no matter how great the wrong. (Acts 7, Psalm 51)
- C. We are to forgive judicially and relationally.

III. The extent of forgiveness.

- A. Jewish tradition said to forgive a person three times. (Amos 1:3, 6; Job 33:29)
- B. Jesus taught to forgive seventy times seventy. He is calling for an indefinite number. (Luke 17:4, James 2:13, Matthew 5:7)
- C. The extent of forgiveness is unlimited.

IV. The effect of forgiveness. (Matthew 6)

- A. Reasons to forgive.
 - 1. We have example of Jesus. (Ephesians 4:32)
 - 2. It is the glory of man. (Proverbs 19:11)
 - 3. It is the character of saints
 - 4. To free our conscience.
 - 5. To deliver ourselves from Satan. (2 Corinthians 2)
 - 6. To be forgiven. (James 2:13, Matthew 6:12-14)

B. We will know God's chastening and we will deny ourselves the power and joy of our salvation if we do not forgive. (Mark 11:25-26)

C. The effect of forgiveness is experiencing the joy of our salvation, freeing ourselves from salvation and giving others something of value.

D. Real Christians show mercy. First we forgive, then we worship. (Matthew 5:7, 21)

Application Questions:

1. When have you found it difficult to forgive?

2. Why forgive?

3. How would you counsel someone on how to forgive someone who has hurt them badly? Explain.
