



COMMUNITY

FORGIVENESS

Objective for Learning: To understand the forgiveness of God and the importance of forgiving yourself and others.

Objective for Living: To be able to live, act, and respond with forgiveness.

Objective for Reproducing: To be able to clearly describe and lead others to forgive themselves and others

Scriptures for Forgiveness:

- 1 John 1:9
- Psalm 103:10-14
- Hebrews 8:12
- Romans 5:8
- 1 Timothy 1:15-16
- Ephesians 4:31-32
- Matthew 18:15-17
- Colossians 3:13
- Matthew 6:12
- Proverbs 17:9

How do each of these Scriptures help to **define** and **illuminate** what accountability is and why it is important?

Hearing (Discussion Points and Questions):

Overview:

Forgiveness, though easy to accept, cost Jesus the agony of the cross. The only way for God to forgive our sins was through Christ's sacrifice. God's great love for us led him to his death (Romans 5:8). A deep understanding of the cost of our freedom enables us to forgive others their smaller debts. In the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18, the master forgave the great debt of his servant; a debt equivalent to a life's salary. Nevertheless, when another owed the forgiven servant only a day's wage, the forgiven servant reacted in anger and vengeance. This servant didn't truly understand the cost the master paid to forgive him. Failing to forgive your brother or sister will change you. Bitterness and resentment are like poison, which is a

much greater cost than forgiveness demands. We are called to put aside all malice, anger, and bitterness, and to forgive as Christ has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:31-32).

Forgiveness is a daily practice, it isn't just for the "big" sins against you. But we are to forgive our debtors as Christ has forgiven our debts each and every day (Matthew 6:12). Forgiving another or yourself doesn't have a limit. Jesus told Peter that forgiveness applies to countless offenses and even endlessly repeated offenses (Matthew 18:21-22). Forgiveness is not easy and is challenging, but God is able to help through the move of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. We need to only ask for His guidance!

Questions for Learning and Living:

- Is it hard for you to forgive yourself? What are things that you haven't forgiven yourself for?
- Do you forgive yourself and others daily? What are you holding on to that is hindering you from forgiving people who have hurt you in the past?
- Is there anyone that you have bitterness or unforgiveness towards? How would you process forgiving them?
- Have you ever experienced forgiveness, but not reconciliation at the same time? What did that look like? How did you resolve that in your heart and mind?
- What might happen if we don't forgive others?

Questions for Reproducing:

- € How would you explain the cost of Jesus' forgiveness and the importance for us to forgive others as He has forgiven us?
- € How can you tell if someone has unforgiveness or bitterness towards themselves or others?
- € How would you help walk someone through unforgiveness?
- € How would you help someone see that unforgiveness hurts them more often than the person that they are withholding it from?

Doing (Implementation and Application):

- What is Jesus saying to you about this?
- How are you going to respond? Look at your personal discipleship assessment.
 - Give 1-3 concrete action steps that you are going to do this week to help you take the next step of learning, living, or reproducing in this area.
- Do a heart inventory. Is there anyone you need to forgive or anything you need to forgive yourself for?
- Choose one of the Scriptures that really impacted you and commit to memorizing it this week.