

Going Deeper

Your weekly guide to understanding God with others

GUNK - Part 2 Life-changing Forgiveness

TIM PIESSE

Introduction

From the beginning of time, people have had disagreements and have struggled to resolve interpersonal conflict. The Bible is littered with damaged and broken relationships, from Cain and Abel to Paul and Barnabas. The ugly reality of our broken nature is exposed in its raw form in scripture.

Jesus offers us a solution to resolve these times of challenge: forgiveness. Forgiveness is never an easy path, but ultimately, it is the only way that offers freedom from the bondage of bitterness and resentment that ensues when we are unwilling to forgive.

Read Matthew 18:21-35, Genesis 4:24, Ephesians 4:30-32.

Discuss

1. Why is forgiveness hard? What are some of the barriers that stop us from forgiving others?
2. Read Ephesians 4:30-32. Are there any benefits from practicing forgiveness that you have experienced in your own life? Share with the group.
3. What other Bible verses can you find that speak about the need and benefits of forgiveness?
4. To forgive is an act of power for the person who is hurt. How is this so? Discuss.
5. When we refuse to forgive another person, bitterness and resentment can build up in our hearts. Why is unforgiveness such a burden to carry? What can be further consequences of this?

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6. Is forgiveness always necessary? What happens if we chose not to forgive someone else?
7. How can we find strength and courage to forgive those who have wronged us deeply, especially if they are not sorry for their actions/ words against us?

Respond

Jesus made it clear that we are to forgive others, just as he has forgiven us. Take a moment to think of a person that you need to offer forgiveness to. What is one practical step you can take in order to start the process and begin to cultivate an attitude of love, kindness, patience and understanding towards this person ? Commit to taking this step this week.