

Oxford Baptist Church – February 21, 2016

Pastor Robin W. Pifer

Relationships: Improving our Connections – “Forgiveness”

NIV Ephesians 4:31-32 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, **forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.**

What is forgiveness? Forgiveness is giving up my right to hurt people who have hurt me. It is impossible to live this life without getting hurt, offended, misunderstood, rejected, lied to, betrayed, stabbed in the back or disappointed.

“The word “forgive” means to wipe the slate clean, to pardon, and to cancel a debt. When we wrong someone, we seek his or her forgiveness in order for the relationship to be restored. It is important to remember that forgiveness is not granted because a person deserves to be forgiven. Instead, it is an act of love, mercy, and grace”

John 20:21-23

1. Forgive to Experience the _____.

- We forgive because we have been forgiven. Eph 4:32
- We forgive so bitterness does not control us. Hebrews 12:14-15
- We forgive to experience peace.

Matt 6:12-15

2. Forgive to _____.

Romans 12:17-22

The Example of Jesus – “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.” Luke 23:34

1John 1:8-10

3. Forgive to be _____ in Jesus Christ.

1John 2:1-2 - Short Accounts and Quick to Forgive – Process

Father, I acknowledge that I’ve held resentment and bitterness against _____. I confess this as sin and ask you to forgive me. I forgive _____ for all offenses, painful memories, feelings, words and actions. Remind me, Lord, not to hold any more resentments, bitterness, or anger to this person but rather to love this person. Father, I ask you to also forgive _____. Thank you for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus name, Amen.

Life Group Questions

1. Share with each other the greatest picture of forgiveness demonstrated in the Old Testament.
2. Why is it important that we forgive when we have been forgiven by Christ?
3. How does forgiveness relate to the Spirit-filled life? Reread the scriptures from the first point of the message.
4. In what ways does bitterness hinder our life?
5. Discuss the forgiveness of Jesus on the cross. How does the forgiveness of Jesus help us in forgive others “when they do not know what they are doing”?
6. How does an unforgiving spirit hinder the work of God in a local church?
7. Share an example where you forgave someone. How did it feel? What were the results? What happened in the relationship(s)?
8. Forgiveness is an important step in our freedom in Christ to live a godly and responsible life. How does the forgiveness of God in our lives impact our daily life with others?
9. What are the spiritual results of being forgiven? List a number of words or verses that demonstrate all the benefits of being a forgiven and forgiving person.