

Connection

Have you ever bitten into a beautiful apple only to find it rotten inside? Describe that experience.

Content

**“When you’ve been wronged, you have a choice:
hold onto the hurt and rot inside, or forgive and flourish.**

**Colossians 3:13b says, “Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.”
Jesus is our example.**

Have you asked Jesus for forgiveness? Have you ever asked anyone else to forgive you?

The Principle of Forgiveness

Matthew 6:12 tells us to forgive those who have sinned against us. We often would rather get even, in an attempt to balance the scales. But withholding forgiveness like taking poison and waiting for it to kill the other person.

1. Describe a time you felt sinned against or abused. How did you react?

Instead, Jesus commands us to forgive, and to keep on forgiving – without limit! Read Matthew 18:21-22, and Luke 17:3-5. In the latter, the apostles sound flustered with this instruction to keep on forgiving, and they say to Jesus, “Show us how to increase our faith.”

2. How can you forgive the person who never asked you for forgiveness, or who continues to wrong you?

Why did the disciples tie this to a need for increased faith?

The Posture of Forgiveness

Don't just pretend; really love others, Romans 12:9 tells us. That should be our starting place, our posture of forgiveness. "Since God chose you...Make allowances for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you." Read Colossians 3:12-13 and notice how this is fleshed out.

4. Write here the name of a specific person in your life who you need to "make allowances" for today: _____ What would this look like?

The other side of the coin is that God promises to be the fair judge of all evil. Romans 12:19 says, "Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God."

5. What words could you pray to ask God to handle an evil in your life and relieve you of the weight of unforgiveness?

The Practice of Forgiveness

In I Peter 3:9 God says that no matter how hard it is to do, if you pay back wrong with blessings He will bless you. His face will shine upon you. God is pleased when we make it our practice to forgive. That doesn't mean the person who has done wrong is off the hook with Him. But it does mean you can let go of the hurts from your own past.

6. Read I Peter 2:19-23. When it comes to forgiveness, how will the example set by Jesus in His own suffering change how you act today?

Commitment

Who do you need to forgive right now?



Begin with prayer. Listen with care. Eat / Engage with another. Serve. Share your story.

This week, **begin with prayer** for a person in your life who needs to hear of Jesus' love. Begin today with this tool of how to B.L.E.S.S them.

Would you like to give any updates to the group on someone you have shared about in the past?