

HAMMER IT HOME: *Live the Text and Do the Truth*

1. Jesus came to set us free—free from the bondage of our sin. (John 8:32) Bitterness is a bondage that endangers the individual soul and can destroy community. **How can we keep bitterness from springing up in our lives and in our community life?**

For Personal/Private Application: Examine yourself. Are there offenses/hurts—real or perceived—that you are holding onto that are hindering your worship and walk with the Lord? Identify them, bring them to the Cross in prayer, and leave them there. If you need help in the process of finding true freedom and experiencing God’s grace, enlist your LifeGroup leader(s) and/or community.

HIDE IT IN OUR HEARTS: *Linger in the Text and Let it Dwell Richly*

Paul instructs us to “let the word of Christ dwell within us richly.” (Col. 3:16) May this Word of Christ find good soil in our hearts as we memorize and meditate upon it until our next LifeGroup gathering.

“...forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.”

—Colossians 3:13b



Sunday, August 19, 2018



Forgive One Another

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HEAR IT: *Listen to the Text and Discover the Truth*

TWO TEXTS AND TWO WORDS:

“So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, **whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.** Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.”

—Colossians 3:12–14

“Then Peter came and said to Him, “**Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?** Up to seven times?” Jesus said to him, I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.”

—Matthew 18:21–22

The New Testament uses two words that are translated “forgive” in our English Bible. These two words teach us that forgiveness is all about _____ and all about _____.

Forgiveness is essential because _____ is _____.

THE PARABLE AND ITS POINTS:

“For this reason **the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves...**”

—Matthew 18:23–35

1. I should forgive _____ I have been forgiven.

“...Then summoning him, his lord said to him, ‘You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. **Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?**’” (v. 32, 33)

- An unforgiving spirit is first a vertical problem, not a horizontal problem.

2. I should forgive _____ I have been forgiven.

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, **forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.**”

—Ephesians 4:32

- ...without _____.

“Then Peter came and said to Him, ‘**Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?**’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to **seventy times seven.**’” (v. 21, 22)

- ...without _____.

- ...without _____.

“I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

—Jeremiah 31:34

3. I should forgive _____ forgiven.

“For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But **if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.**”

—Matthew 6:14,15

“My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, **if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart.**”

—Matthew 18:35

- Bitterness brings _____, forgiveness brings _____.

“...if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; **first** be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.”

—Matthew 5:23,24

- The commitments I make in extending grace and forgiveness:

a. I will not _____ (Matthew 18:27)

b. I will not _____ (Romans 12:19)

c. I will not _____ (Ephesians 4:31)

“Let all **bitterness** and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.”

—Ephesians 4:31

“See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of **bitterness** springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled.”

—Hebrews 12:15

- Forgiveness is rare, hard, costly, and... _____.

“When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He **made you alive** together with Him, **having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.**”

—Colossians 2:13,14

HASH IT OUT: Look into the Text and Develop the Truth

1. Jesus spoke frequently through parables. Parables often followed a “**three-part structure**” (3 segments, events, people, etc.) along with “**end stress**” (emphasis on the last of the three) to drive home the “**primary focal point**”. This parable follows the same pattern. Can you **identify the three segments** (exchanges)? ...as well as the **similarities** of the first two segments and the **uniqueness** of the final segment?
2. We noted that forgiveness is **rare, hard and costly**. There is a natural progression to the order. It is rare because it is hard, it is hard because it is costly (we identified three of the costs). But not to forgive is even more costly. **What are the costs of an unforgiving spirit?**
3. The final point emphasized is that forgiveness is **powerful**. It extends love, liberty and new life. It is most powerfully demonstrated in Christ’s forgiveness of us through His substitutionary death. **How has Christ’s forgiveness transformed you? ...and how should it?**

What other powerful pictures of forgiveness have you seen,... in Scripture? ...in history? ...in your own experience?