



UNITY - DEFINING MOMENTS: THE TIME YOU'RE ASKED TO FORGIVE

Ephesians 5:15-16 NIV

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

1. The Beginning of Forgiveness.

- A. Forgiving means to “**give** something up.”
- B. We are not made to carry unforgiveness.
- C. Forgiveness is related to **forgetfulness**.

Psalm 25:7a NIV

Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways...

Isaiah 43:25 NIV

I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.

- D. Forgiving leads to being forgiven.

2. The Binding/Loosing of Forgiveness.

Luke 23:24 NIV

Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

A. Forgiveness is twofold...

- i. A **divine** choice.

Mark 2:7 NIV

“Why does this fellow talk like that? He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

- ii. A **human** obligation.

Luke 6:37 NIV

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.”

B. Forgiveness by Christ.

- i. Sin is to be **expected**.

Matthew 18:15-17 NIV

“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.”

- ii. Forgiveness is to be **accepted**.

Matthew 18:18 NIV

“I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

- iii. Unity is to be **protected**.

Matthew 18:19-20 NIV

“Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

- iv. Forgiving is **unlimited**.

Matthew 18:21-22 NIV

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.”

3. The Best Way To Forgive.

- A. Admit you need to forgive.

Mark 11:25 NIV

“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

- B. **Surrender** to love.

Romans 5:8 NIV

But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 Peter 4:8 NIV

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

- C. Release the past.

Isaiah 65:16 NIV

Whoever invokes a blessing in the land will do so by the God of truth; he who takes an oath in the land will swear by the God of truth. For the past troubles will be forgotten and hidden from my eyes.

- D. **Complete** the process.

John 20:23 NIV

“If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.”