

COURAGEOUS FRIENDSHIP

Session #7: Forgiveness

Opening Question

Discuss: How often is explicit forgiveness practiced in your relationships? Can you give examples?

Input

Big Idea: Forgiveness is a required blessing for the follower of Jesus.

Great Expectations: Vulnerability

Col 3:13 | *Bear with each other* and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

1 John 1:8

We must understand beforehand that all of our relationships will experience rupture on this side of the grave. We cannot hold our friendships with brothers and sisters to an unrealistic standard because this will lead to judgementalism, concealing the truth, and ultimately breakdown of relationships rather than strengthening.

Discussion: What are some of the ways that the world gives us unrealistic expectations for friendships?

Rupture: Minimizing damage

Stop: step away. Take a breather

Ask: why am I upset? Can you talk about the rupture with another friend?

Caution: a soft answer turns away wrath

Yield: consider others as more important than yourselves.

Repair: Confession and confrontation

Proverbs 27:5-6 | ⁵ Better is open rebuke than hidden love. ⁶ Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.

Sometimes we know we've done wrong and we can take the first step by confessing.

Sometimes we acknowledge rupture by telling a friend that "I was hurt by, or I was angry when."

If the relational credit exists, sometimes we can navigate the rupture and figure out where blame lies together. "Our conversation the other day left me ----- and I'm not sure exactly why; I wanted to talk about it with you."

Discussion: What truths are important to remember if you are being confronted by a friend? What about when you are the one confronting?

Discussion: How can we grow in forgiveness? What are some intentional habits we can build in our lives to invite and pursue 1. Acknowledging rupture and 2. Seeking repair?

Major Themes Discussion

Large Group Discussion

1. When was the last time you asked for forgiveness? When was the last time you were asked to forgive?
2. What barriers to acknowledging (and repairing) ruptures do we have at *City Church*? What do you think it will take for us to grow out of them?

Application

1. Corporate (What does this mean for **us** as *City Church*?) In our *disposition*? In our communal *practices*?
2. Personal (What does this mean for **me** as a *Christian*?) In my *disposition* toward neighbors, coworkers, classmates, etc.? In my daily *practices* of honesty and hospitality?

Next Week: Friendship Skills–Endurance