

MESSAGE: Christians Forgive

TEXT: Philemon

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COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

Introduction:

1. _____ forgives (Luke 15:11-32)

“²¹ And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²² But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. ²³ And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴ For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.”

2. A _____ forgives (Ephesians 4:32)

“³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”

3. Our actions _____ others within the body (Philemon 1-3; 23,24)

4. The characteristics of Christians who forgive are _____ and _____, producing _____, _____ and _____ (4-7)

- Forgiveness appeals to _____ (Philemon 8-14)
- Forgiveness _____ with the outcome (Philemon 15-16)
- Forgiveness _____, _____ and _____ us of God’s greater forgiveness. (Philemon 17-20)

READ PHILEMON

1. In Paul’s personal letter to Philemon we see the Apostle express a heartfelt appeal yet Paul also addressed this letter to the church (Philemon 2). What benefits are there in others’ knowing of this personal call to forgive?
2. Was Paul merely “battering” Philemon up (Philemon 4-7) in order to gain a better outcome? How did reminding Philemon of his Christ-like reputation encourage his response to Paul’s appeal?
3. Paul considers that “perhaps” Onesimus was separated from Philemon for a while, “that you might have him back forever” (Philemon 15). How does trusting in a sovereign God in all situations provide us with continuing assurance? (Read Genesis 45:4-8; 50:20)
4. Often we settle for a lesser version of forgiveness, just to move on. Are you aware of any relationships that could be more fully restored through the love of Christ? Does Galatians 6:1-2 compel your support of any such situations?
5. Read Ephesians 4:32. How does remembering that you’re forgiven impact your inclination to extend forgiveness? Whether you resonate most with Onesimus, Paul, or Philemon, is there any action towards greater reconciliation you need to pray about? How does accountability shape your response? (Philemon 22-24)
6. John 13:34-35 “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” May South Delta see our love of Jesus Christ and each other this week!