

September 22, 2019
LOVE UNLEASHED - Part 5
"Love Forgives"

1 John 1:9 (ESV): "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

When we have accepted God's amazing gift of forgiveness of our sins, we're freed to live today *without* guilt or shame, *with* hope and peace, and to live for all eternity with Jesus.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT): "8God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. 10For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

Gateway's Mission: leading everyone to become more like Jesus

1 Corinthians 13:5 (NIV11): "...[Love] is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs."

Jesus: "'and forgive us our sins, *as* we have forgiven those who sin against us.'" (Matthew 6:12 NLT – *emphasis added*)

We forgive as, because, we've been forgiven.

Jesus: "... 'Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing.'..." (Luke 23:34 NLT)

There are times when forgiving another seems impossible.

Jesus and the Bible command us to forgive, regardless of what's happened or the reasons behind the other person's actions.

Matthew 6:14-15 (NLT): "'14If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. 15But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.'"

Colossians 3:13 (NLT): "Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others."

MYTHS ABOUT FORGIVENESS

- I can't forgive until I *feel* it.

Forgiveness is a **decision** to *not* hold someone accountable for what they've done.

- I can't forgive until the other person shows they've **repented**.

Jesus forgave his enemies while he hung on the cross, while there was *no evidence of repentance* from any of them.

- To forgive means to **minimize** what happened.

Forgiveness doesn't minimize when real sin and evil are present, but it chooses to leave vengeance to **God**.

Romans 12:19 (NLT): "Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, 'I will take revenge; I will pay them back,' says the LORD." (quoted from Deuteronomy 32:35)

Forgiveness isn't about fairness but **freedom**.

- To forgive means I must **forget** the offense.

Hebrews 8:12 (NIV): "'For I [the Lord] will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.'" (quoted from Jeremiah 31:34)

God chooses to no longer hold our sins against us when we repent and receive His forgiveness.

Forgiveness is a **process** that often takes time, **choosing** to be obedient to Christ and acknowledging our decision to forgive, with Christ's help, time after time after time.

A Helpful Distinction About Forgiveness (from Dr. Henry Cloud):

- Forgiveness is about the **past**.

It only takes *one* to offer forgiveness.

- Reconciliation is about the **present**.

It takes *two* to reconcile.

- Trust is about the **future**.

Next Week: Love Sees

Get the *Life Journal* Bible Reading Plan at gateway-community.org/Find-it

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