

SERMON SERIES: Giving Others a Second Chance

SPEAKER: Jed Mullenix

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Seek the Word

Read Proverbs 17:14 and 19:11. Overlooking offenses.

- What are some of the results of starting a quarrel? What does Proverbs compare starting a quarrel to? (*Opening a dam*)
- What is one way of dealing with offenses, according to this verse? (*Overlook them. When possible, do not hold offense against the person.*)
- Obviously, this is not talking about extreme offenses that cause lasting pain and widespread destruction. What are some examples of instances where overlooking an offense might be the best way to deal with it? (*Someone disagrees with you on social media. Someone makes an offhand comment that you don't like. A person makes an honest mistake without intending to hurt you.*)

Read Proverbs 17:9. Cultivate love for the other person.

- What are the two choices we have when someone offends us or hurts us? (*We can dwell on it or we can forgive it.*)
- How can practicing love for the other person help us forgive him? (*We begin to see things from the other's point of view and understand why the offense happened.*)
- Jed explained that the image of unforgiveness in the Bible is like strapping the unforgiven person onto our backs and carrying him with us. Have you been in that position? How does carrying that person and the unforgiveness along with you affect your life?

Read Romans 12:19a, 21. Overcome evil with the forgiveness of God.

- What do we do when people commit truly evil acts toward us, according to Romans 12:19? (*We overcome evil with good.*)
- What are examples of evil acts that deeply destroy others? (*abuse, neglect, assault, terroristic threats, constant degradation*)
- Where does this type of forgiveness, forgiveness of deep injuries, come from? (*From Christ.*)
- How can we possibly ever forgive the people who have wronged us so deeply? (*We cannot do it. We must let God work through us. We can begin to understand and extend forgiveness because we have experienced the forgiveness of God in our own lives.*)
- What kind of effect does forgiveness have on the person forgiving? (*It heals our wounds, helps us be empathetic, teaches us good boundaries, helps us move forward, heals relationships.*)
- What kind of effect can forgiveness have on the forgiven person? (*They experience the grace of God.*)

Talk About It

Forgiveness is a tricky subject. Think about a time someone hurt you. You can share that experience in your group or just keep it to yourself.

- How did you feel when this happened?
- How did you react?

When a person hurts you, they might do something that has deep ramifications in all areas of your life. Forgiving them might take a while, and that is ok. The process of forgiveness involves working through the pain that the offense created and learning about yourself as well as thinking about why the other one did what they did.

- Does forgiving someone mean you accept them fully back into your life without reservation? (**ABSOLUTELY NOT!** People sometimes erroneously believe that if you've forgiven a person who hurt you, you must then invite them back into the relationship and trust them again. Trust is different from forgiveness. You forgive a person for your own spiritual and emotional health, not for the health of the other person. You can forgive that person and still take steps to protect yourself from him/her and maintain healthy boundaries if the person is a toxic person who will hurt you again.)
- What might forgiveness look like in the instance that someone hurts you and is not repentant or is still living a life that will be dangerous for you to re-enter?