



Peace: Forgiveness Changes Everything

Pastor Weston Stutz

- **You will never experience the peace you could experience until you forgive the people who have hurt you most.**

"You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."

Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And he said, 'Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.' But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

ACTS 7:51-60 | ESV

- **Harboring bitterness towards someone hurts you much more than it hurts them.**
- **An offense can happen in a moment but being offended is a decision.**

1. Start your day with receiving forgiveness.

- It will be very hard to practice forgiving others if you do not practice forgiving yourself.
- Conviction is a built in alarm system that goes off when you approach sin that will end up hurting you, your family, or your future.
- Conviction in its finest use is momentary relief to bring you back to the joys of Jesus.

2. Pass the forgiveness on.

- When you accepted Jesus' free gift of forgiveness, you gave up your right to not forgive others.

"For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

MATTHEW 6:14-15 | NIV

- Perhaps the number one blockage from God answering your prayers is the unforgiveness in your heart.

3. Unhitch your healing and forgiveness from their actions.

- Forgiving someone who hurt you is you severing the source of suffering and unhitching your ability to heal from their choices.

4. Let God be the judge .

- You are never more like the Devil than when trying to take God's job.
- When you allow Jesus and his forgiveness to enter your past stories of pain, he can rewrite them.
- You're never more like Jesus than when you forgive those who hurt you.

5. Be like Jesus .

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ACTS 7:58-60 | ESV

- When you forgive like Jesus, you begin to see people through their brokenness, not your offense.

Small Group Questions

- 1** Share one thing that stood out to you in this week's sermon and why?
- 2** What is your initial reaction to the concept of forgiveness? Do you react in denial, anger, self-righteousness, or judgment? Do you perhaps feel hostile toward the whole idea of forgiveness as a necessity?
- 3** What characteristics in your life might indicate that you haven't fully forgiven past hurts, even if you know in your head what you need to do? How can you start walking towards the freedom that forgiveness gives?
- 4** How can we be praying for you this week?