



First Baptist Church Selmer

JESUS VS CULTURE: BUILDING A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW • BE KIND! •
EPHESIANS 4:30-32; MATTHEW 6:14-15 • 1/28/2024

MAIN POINT

Because God has graciously forgiven us through Christ we are to show our gratitude by being compassionate and forgiving to others.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What things do you think make God grieve the most?

How often do you stop and think about how your actions may cause God to grieve?

"There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers." - Proverbs 6:16-19

After seeing these seven things, have you ever grieved God?

We could look at each of the seven things that are an abomination to God but we will look specifically today at one of them, *"one who sows discord among brothers."*

Have you ever been a part of a conversation that directly or indirectly was sowing discord among brothers?

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EPHESIANS 4:30-31.

*"30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice." (ESV)*

How do our relationships with others reflect a different way of life from the rest of the world? Give specific examples of actions in those relationships that grieve and please God.

In verse 30, Paul challenged his readers to understand that God's Spirit grieves when we express hostility to others, in attitude, speech, or actions.

According to Ephesians 4:31, what are the wicked ways that grieve Him?

What are believers to do with those sinful attitudes and actions?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EPHESIANS 4:32.

"32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." (ESV)

As we did last week, let's look again at the Put-Off, Renewed Mind, Put-On Principle:

Put OFF: Bitterness, Wrath, Anger, Clamor (Crying out), Slander

Renewed Mind: "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God..." - Ephesians 4:30a

Put ON: Kindness, Compassion, Forgiveness

Discuss what Paul might mean by the terms kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving.

How are each of these terms a reflection of God's love for us?

Kind means caring or showing love practically. Compassionate refers to being moved on one's insides in response to a need and then acting. Forgiving is literally "acting with grace," and forgiving one another is certainly one of the best ways to extend undeserved

favor. Paul pointed out specifically that this is a God-like quality. Because He forgave ... in Christ, we are to extend forgiveness to others.

What are the positive and/or negative motivations that prompt us to walk or live a Christian life?

The Bible is often reduced to a book of rules or "thou shalt nots" but the truth is the Bible also teaches us what to do and how to act to live our lives in a way that brings glory to God. The Put-Off, Renewed Mind, and Put-On Principle is the perfect balance of humanity's responsibility walking in side by side with the transformation of our minds that can only be accomplished through the Holy Spirit.

According to verse 32, what should be the primary motivation for forgiving others?

Why is this statement considered a command, and not a suggestion?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 6:14-15

"14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (ESV)

Forgiveness of others is not merely a good suggestion, but a command that we are to follow in our lives to bring glory to God and reflect His gracious forgiveness of us. Jesus would teach his disciples later in Matthew 18 through a parable of the unforgiving servant. The servant whose lord forgave him much by canceling his great debt was unwilling to forgive another servant who owed him only a little. Since we, too, have been forgiven a great debt we were unable to pay, we, too, should extend forgiveness to those around us for the far smaller debt that they owe.

It is not merely a suggestion, but a command, one that carries with it eternal consequences.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How does today's text affect the way you view others?

What are some practical ways we can remember God's great gift of forgiveness daily?

How might those daily reminders re-frame our attitudes, words, and actions toward people who may be hard to forgive?

As a group, how can we demonstrate together a true passion for God and a passion for others through the ways we love and forgive people?

PRAYER

Ask God to help your group look inward and be honest about their own view of God and of others. Thank God that He made a way through Christ so we can be adopted into His family. As you grow together in Christ, pray that you would all learn to love and serve others well, with the forgiveness, humility, and sacrifice Jesus showed you.

COMMENTARY

| EPHESIANS 4:30-32

4:30. Parents grieve when their children squabble. How much more must the Spirit lament when believers squabble with one another? After all, He is Holy, and He intends for us to become more and more holy. This is why He "sealed" us when we were converted. From the beginning of our Christian life when we were sealed until the end when we are fully redeemed, we are to grow in being like Christ.

4:31. In verses 22-24 Paul had used the notion of taking off (the old man) and putting on (the new man) about the decisive change that happened at conversion. Here he used similar language to speak of six sinful attitudes and actions. Believers constantly seek to keep these removed from their lives. They are all poisonous to personal relationships. "Bitterness" can be translated as "sourness," referring to a cynical or resentful outlook. "Anger" refers to an outburst of rage or a flash of irritation. "Wrath" (negatively) means "a sullen, settled angry attitude" (but see 5:6 for God's wrath). "Clamor" refers to loud voices raised in a quarrel or a brawl. "Slander" means "speaking evil of others, wishing to hurt their reputation." "Malice" summarizes all of the preceding and can also be translated "evil" or "wickedness."

4:32. In contrast to the six vices are three virtues by which believers are to relate to one another. These are God-like qualities He has extended to us. "Kind" means caring or showing love practically (see 2:7 for God's kindness). "Compassionate" (tenderhearted) refers to being moved on one's insides in response to a need and then acting. "Forgiving" is literally "acting with grace," and forgiving the offenses of others is certainly one of the best ways to extend undeserved favor. Paul pointed out specifically that this is a God-like quality. Because He forgave in Christ, we are to extend forgiveness to others.