

Community Group Discussion Questions

THE WAY FORWARD – NO. 5 “Forgiveness” – Colossians 3:12-14

Theme: *The importance of forgiving others of the wrongs done to us in order to move forward as individuals, families, and as a church!*

In this sermon series, we're looking at practices which need to become part of our lives as individuals, families, and as a church if we're to move forward in ways that reflect spiritual and emotional health. We've already considered such practices as *reflection, prayer, fasting, and repentance*. We now come to consider the importance of *forgiveness*. Why forgiveness? Several reasons:

- One of the lessons that came out of a diagnostic study done last year was the need to process our hurts and conflicts with people in ways that promote unity, healing, and reconciliation. To do that, we need to learn how to implement the Bible's teaching on forgiveness.
- We're also considering forgiveness because the reality is...we live in a world where people hurt us...sometimes in ways that scar us emotionally for life.

If there is to be true healing for us, we need to explore and apply the answers to the 3 questions which were addressed in the sermon: (1) What is forgiveness? (2) Why practice it? (3) What's the motivation to do so?

Gathering Together (Icebreaker)

What is your most memorable experience or story of forgiveness? What was the outcome for the people involved?

Growing Together (Truth/Equipping)

Read Colossians 3:12-14:

What Is Forgiveness?

1. The Bible says that when we ask the Lord to forgive us, He does so. It also says that He “will never again remember our sins” (Jeremiah 31:34). If God is all-knowing, does He really forget? What does this mean? What are the implications for our forgiving others? Are we required to forget their offense against us?

2. Does forgiveness mean the immediate restoration of a broken relationship? Why or why not?
3. If individuals are forgiven for their wrong behavior, even crimes, should they be held accountable? See Romans 13:4.
4. When we say to the person who has wronged us, “I forgive you,” what are we doing? Should our behavior toward the person change? If so, how?

Why Practice Forgiveness?

5. How is our Heavenly Father's forgiveness of us related to our forgiving others? See Matthew 6:12,14-15; Colossians 3:13.
6. What are some of the ways we may be affected by our holding onto hurts instead of granting forgiveness?

What Is the Motivation to Forgive?

7. How does the Bible describe how the Lord forgives us? See Nehemiah 9:17; Colossians 2:13-14; Matthew 18:21-22; Romans 3:23-24.

Getting Real with One Another (Accessibility)

1. Growing up, how did your family of origin address conflict? How has the behavior of your parents in this area impacted you when you face conflict?
2. Think back to a recent experience when someone hurt you. How did you handle it? Looking back, what could you have done differently to promote healing and reconciliation?
3. What should motivate us to exercise a forgiving spirit?
4. Who do you need to forgive? What steps will you take before our Sacred Assembly (February 21), to promote peace?

Group Prayer Time (Supplication)

Pray that the Lord would use the service of Sacred Assembly to prepare our church for a bright, God-honoring future. Pray also for those in our community and church who are dealing with difficulties right now.