

Seek First

The Kingdom of God

SUPERNATURAL FORGIVENESS

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The Chapel

November 24, 2024

PERSONAL STUDY _____

Directions: Use this for your personal devotion time and/or to prepare for your Small Group discussion.

Scripture Passage: Matthew 18:21-35

21 Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

23 "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. 24 When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26 So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' 27 And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. 28 But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' 29 So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' 30 He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. 31 When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. 32 Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33 And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' 34 And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. 35 So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS _____

Directions: Read the passage and record your observations.

1. What is the "big idea" of the passage? _____

2. What main life application question does the passage address/answer? _____

3. What is one way you can apply it this week? _____

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GROUP STUDY

Directions: Use **BOTH** the personal and group questions for your group's discussion.

OPENER: How have you seen unforgiveness impact someone's life—or your own?

The Poison of Unforgiveness:

Holding onto a small or great offense affects our physical, emotional, and spiritual health. In addition, our resulting behaviors impact others short and long-term.

Forgiveness releases us from the poison infecting our own lives.

Colossians 3:13 says, "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Although an offender may hold authority over you in a past or current situation, you do not need to yield to a prison cell of destructive thoughts and behaviors.

Jesus says in the Lord's Prayer that we are to forgive others just as we have asked God to forgive us. Through Christ's sacrificial death on the cross, God graciously and mercifully provides forgiveness we do not deserve.

Ephesians 4:32 says, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

- Which of the five signs of unforgiveness (re-living offenses, character assassination, re-victimization, insomnia, or awkward holidays) resonated with you the most? Why?
- How has spending time in prayer and reading the Bible helped you let go of hurt from a past offense (no names!)
- If you're comfortable, share a prayer request for help in letting go of an offense. How can we support and encourage you to show God's grace and mercy to the person(s) who hurt you?
- **APPLY:** Who do you need to ask forgiveness from? Pray about how to ask and then do it!

The Path to Forgiveness:

Developing a pattern of thankfulness for God's provision in our lives is a deliberate action we can take to cultivate love, mercy, grace and forgiveness. Loving God means we will be strengthened to love others in the way that honors Him and them.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 "In all things give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

- What does forgiveness look like in a situation where reconciliation isn't possible, or the other person refuses to change?
- How does forgiveness free us, regardless of the other person's response?
- **APPLY:** Who or what are you thankful for today? Share your thanks to God so others can hear of His goodness. Pray for greater trust in the Holy Spirit to guide you to love like Jesus. Ask daily for His wisdom in your thoughts, words, and actions.