



Sunday October 18, 2020
THE CALL TO FORGIVE- I

If you have been carrying the weight of a wrong that was done to you in the past, this message may be one that is hard to hear because it involves a stirring of our hearts and our spirits. While this may be uncomfortable, the good news is that God wants to cleanse and take away what can be toxic to our spiritual health so that he can bring us to a place of freedom in our lives.

Instances: Family relationships, marital relationships, the workplace, even in the body of Christ have situations where unforgiveness prevails.

God commands His people to forgive one another. He loves us so much that does not want us to go down the destructive road of unforgiveness. That's why he gives us a call to forgive.

The call to forgive is hard work

Forgiveness in the Old Testament is the word "Nasa" means to lift up, bear, dismiss, send away

Today we look at **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FORGIVE** and next week we will explore **HOW DO WE REALLY FORGIVE.**

MEANING: Forgiveness – In the Old Testament, comes from the Hebrew word "Nasa" means to lift up, bear, dismiss, send away.

Three Greek words are translated "forgiveness" in the New Testament:

aphiemi (let go, send away, pardon, forgive)

apoluo (let go, loose)

charizomai (be gracious) are used.

FORGIVENESS IS SO VITAL TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Forgiveness is the central doctrine of our faith and is an essential and inseparable part of our Christian walk

- A. It affects our relationship with God when we chose not to forgive

I John 4:20-21 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

Unforgiveness is sin and it separates us from the fellowship with God. An unforgiving spirit will destroy our hearts. It separates us from reaping the benefits of our dependence on His wisdom and from growing more in the Fruit of the Spirit.

- B. Unforgiveness can affect our body and soul-

Psalms 32: 3 When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long.

Proverbs 12: 5 Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad.

When we do not forgive, our health is affected- our body weakens and makes it more susceptible to physical ailments. Often physical disorders are traced to times when bitterness began to develop.



Failing to forgive have **outcomes** such as elevated blood pressure, vascular resistance, decreased immune response, and worse outcomes in coronary artery disease*

*(Norman K. Forgiveness: How it Manifests in our Health, Wellbeing, and Longevity. Master of Applied Positive Psychology August 2017)

Anxiety is often driven by things that have not been resolved or settled. It affects our mind and our soul leading to a depletion in our emotional energy leading to stress, anxiety and depression. Harboring unforgiveness can result in coping poorly with the stress of bitter relationships making us vulnerable to different habits and patterns that can easily turn into addictions.

C. Forgiveness is the key to answered prayers.

Mark 11: 25-26 And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. "But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.

Prayer is the biggest key to our connect with God. It is through prayer that we communicate to him about all that concerns us. When we are forgiven in Christ, we are assured that He not only hears, but will answer our prayers.

Jesus links prayer with forgiveness, because forgiveness has the power to break resentment, retaliation, and bitterness that can so easily dominate our hearts when we don't forgive. Our unforgiveness renders our prayers ineffective. God will not hear our prayer in a condition of sin.

D. When we do not forgive we open the door for the attack of the enemy

2 Cor 2: 10-11 Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. And what I have forgiven—if there was anything to forgive—I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, 11 in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

Paul wrote this letter to the Church in Corinth- when they caught someone among them in sin and Paul addresses the church in this regard. Paul agrees that the sinner has hurt them and that as a church they were unified in their punishment for him. He then urges them to forgive him and comfort him rather than harbouring his wrong because he says that the devil would take advantage of them.

One of the avenues that the enemy has access into our lives is through the door of unforgiveness- he manipulates and controls. Paul gives clarity and says we should not be unaware and ignorant of what he is trying to do.

E. The measure we use to forgive is what God will use to forgive us

Matthew 6: 14-15 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Forgiveness is not man made but is God's idea and initiative. It is at the heart of God's gracious love. It was God's plan to redeem and restore mankind.



This verse addresses the problem of an unforgiving heart. We must realise the plight of our slavery to sin to understand the freedom that forgiveness brings. It is only when we experience the freedom of forgiveness, will we be able to offer this freedom to others. Those who are honest about their own condition are not only more appreciative of what God has done, but they extend far more grace to others.

NATURE OF TRUE FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness has gained a lot of attention in the science of emotional wholeness and positive psychology.

Forgiveness as seen in secular fields is primarily focused on the positive effects it has on the person who forgives. Forgiveness is not about the relationship but about the forgiver and his or her feeling better of himself. Forgiveness may produce results but does not come from the right motivation.

In the Bible, forgiveness is taught to us by God through Christ. Our motivation to forgive comes from the way He forgives and the Bible shows us how.

The Bible tells us who God is

Ephesians 4: 11 God is rich in mercy and He loved us so much.

This means that God's mercy is a sign of His love for us. His mercy is the kind of mercy that continues to love us even when we are unlovable. The Bible says that we have all sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We are offered total and complete forgiveness of our sins because God loves us and has mercy on us. The mercy of God gives us freedom and a restored relationship with Him that we can never attain on our own. We are justified not because of anything we have done but only because of grace.

Micah 7: 18 who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy.

This means when we come to him in our brokenness it brings God so much joy to forgive and restore us. This is the delight He has in us! No matter how filthy and sinful we are- God's mercy is there.

We can never be too unclean for Jesus- Scripture says though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. This is the kind of merciful forgiveness God shows to us. His mercy is in abundance.

So where should our motivation come from?

OUR MOTIVATION TO FORGIVE MUST COME FROM OUR RESPONSE TO THE LOVE AND MERCY OF GOD.

The love and mercy of God is the primary motivator for a person to forgive one another. God's mercy is the motivation for showing mercy to others.

Luke 6: 36- 37 Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful. "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.



In order for us to be merciful, we must **encounter and reflect the abundant mercy** of God toward us. We were saved by the biggest and greatest act of mercy and now we are called to share the great mercy that we have been shown to others. We show mercy by the way the Bible instructs us to forgive others.

Colossians 3: 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

BY EXTENDING FORGIVENESS TO OTHERS, YOU HELP OTHERS SEE THE OVERFLOW OF GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY.

Repercussions of failing to show mercy.

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18:21-35) is a parable that Jesus tells the disciples in response to Peter's question as to how often should a brother who sins against him must be forgiven. Jesus gives a parable comparing the kingdom of heaven to a king who was merciful to a servant who owed him a huge amount of money and ordered that he be punished. The servant begs for patience and time to pay back. The king in compassion cancels this huge debt showing his mercy. But this servant failed to forgive and refuses his fellow servant's desperate pleas of mercy who owed him money and threw him into prison until he paid the debt. The king hearing this summons the servant and questions his unforgiving and merciless spirit and throws him into prison.

Matthew 18:33-34 Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you? And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

Jesus warns after this parable:

Matthew 18: 35 "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother [g]his trespasses."

This parable shows us these two truths

- To respond to the immense mercy we have so freely received from God by extending the same mercy to our neighbour
- It reminds us that there are serious consequences for our failing to show mercy.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. (Mt 5:7)

Receiving mercy comes to us through our being merciful.

James 2: 13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

This is a wake up call when we withhold mercy to others.

- When we fail to show mercy, we are left to face the consequences of our own unforgiveness. Although the forgiveness we receive for our sins is because of what Christ has done for us on



the cross we forfeit the privilege of enjoying the blessings of being forgiven, which is directly related to the way we extend mercy in forgiving others.

- When we fail to show mercy we also will face the consequences of the sins we ourselves have done. Like the unforgiving servant, who faced the consequences of being thrown to the torturers for not extending mercy to his fellow servant. The mercy due to him was withheld because of the mercy he failed to show thereby reaping the evil he himself sowed.

Unforgiveness is one of the devil's most clever and common temptations on a believer. For you to keep yourself pure, you will have to walk in forgiveness towards others by showing mercy. Such will enable you to find mercy at the judgment.

As believers we know that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is in us. So if we have settled with bitterness, anger and grudges, may this message stir and unsettle you to walk in forgiveness and obtain freedom in Christ because the Scripture reminds us : “‘Vengeance is mine,’ says the Lord. ‘I will repay’” (Romans 12:19).



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE



Sunday October 18, 2020

THE CALL TO FORGIVE- I

This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at apcwo.org/sermons . Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture passages: *1 John 4:20-21, Psalm 32:3, Proverbs 12:5, Mark 11:25-26, 2 Corinthians 2:10-11, Matthew 6:14-15, Micah 7:18, Luke 6:36-37, Colossians 3: 13, Matthew 18: 21-35, James 2:13*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

1. Why is forgiveness so important in our walk with Christ? Review the points addressed in the notes.
2. Examine where our motivation comes from when we forgive one another. What does the Bible say that our motivation should be when we forgive another?
3. When we fail to show mercy and release forgiveness what does the Bible warn us from the Parable of the Unforgiving servant?
4. Unforgiveness is sin. Ask the Lord to bring to your mind anyone you have not forgiven. As a believer, what do you need to do to get right with God? Gather together in twos and take time to pray for each other and ask for God's empowering to forgive someone who has offended you.



FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

1, families to be protected and strengthened

2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.

3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.

Close by thanking God together.



USEFUL RESOURCES



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

WEEKEND SCHOOLS: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: <https://pamfi.org>

CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

CHURCHES: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

WORLD MISSIONS: <https://apcworldmissions.org>