



Session 6:

‘What is forgiveness and how do I do it?’

Giles Arnold

Group Questions:

1. Share an example of a time when you have had to forgive someone. what was it like and how hard/easy was it? What made it hard/easy?
2. What has Jesus' death on the cross got to do with forgiveness?
3. Do we have to keep asking for forgiveness or have we been forgiven for all our sins? If the latter, what do we have to do when we are convicted of sin?
4. Read Matthew 6:9-15. What does it mean, “If we don't forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sin”?
5. Read Ephesians 4:30-32 and Colossians 3:13. How does unforgiveness grieve the Holy Spirit and why?
6. What does Giles mean when he says, “when we step out in forgiveness, something supernatural is happening”?
7. From the teaching about what forgiveness is not, was there anything that you disagreed with or found difficult? If so, what and why?
8. From the teaching about what forgiveness is, what did you find challenging?
9. What do you think about the statement that total forgiveness is choosing not to keep a record of wrong, not telling others about what the person has done to you and blessing the person who we have forgiven? Are you doing this?
10. Why is it important to keep short accounts?

11. Ask the Lord if there are people you need to forgive. Pray for each other to be able to do so. Then pray for that person and start blessing them (now and/or later).
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Notes...

1. Forgiveness is vital for our world and the church
2. Forgiveness relates to grieving the Holy Spirit
3. Forgiveness is not easy
4. Jesus is our example of forgiveness:
 - Not conditional on other person responding
 - Not telling others or keeping going back to it
 - To let them off and ask God to do so
 - To pray for and bless them.
5. Forgiveness **is not**:
 - Approval of what they did
 - Excusing what they did
 - Justifying what they did and pardoning what they did
 - Reconciliation
 - Denying what they did
 - Blindness to what happened
 - Forgetting
 - Refusing to take the wrong seriously
 - Pretending we're not hurt.
6. Forgiveness **is**:
 - Being aware of what someone has done and still forgiving them
 - Choosing to keep no record of wrong (1 Corinthians 13:5)
 - Refusing to punish (1 John 4:18)
 - Not telling what they did
 - Being merciful and gracious (Philippians 4:5)
 - An inner condition
 - Absence of bitterness
 - Forgiving God
 - Forgiving ourselves.
7. Example of Joseph (Genesis 45:1-13)
 - Don't let anyone know what someone said about you or did to you
 - Don't allow anyone to be afraid or intimidated by you
 - Wanting them to forgive themselves and not feel guilty
 - Wanting to let them save face

- Protecting them from their greatest fear
- It's a lifelong commitment
- Praying for them and to be blessed (Matthew 5:44 and 7:12).

8. Action through us:

- Examine our hearts
- Be intentional to forgive
- Take action to remember
- Keep a short account.

Extra reading: Total forgiveness by RT Kendall
Totally forgiving ourselves by RT Kendall
Totally forgiving God by RT Kendall