

Episode 022

Make Room for Forgiveness (Being Prayerful Series)

Introduction

God desires for us to experience personal freedom in all aspects of our lives.

Matthew 6:12 (NIV) - “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

Matthew 6:14-15 (NIV) - “For if you forgive others when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

Seek to forgive those who have sinned against, offended, or hurt us, just as God has shown forgiveness to us. We must examine our hearts for any trace of resentment, so we are not trapped in offense and bitterness, even if we consider ourselves seasoned in prayer. God’s Word remains true for everyone, regardless of the circumstances surrounding the offense or wrong done to us.

Christians who do not forgive may experience unnecessary confusion, frustration, depression, and even physical ailments. Unforgiveness leaves us vulnerable to the enemy’s attacks.

How Do We Exercise Forgiveness?

1. Keep Short Accounts

Hebrews 12:15 (NIV) - “See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.”

Bitterness begins like a small root that grows deeper over time. It is crucial to keep short accounts, forgiving others quickly and fully so that small resentments do not grow into large ones. Unforgiveness imprisons us, while forgiveness sets us free! Forgiveness does not dismiss justice or accountability for those who have wronged us but entrusts it all to God.



2. Trust in God's Vindication

God's Word warns us against seeking our own vindication when falsely accused or wronged. God knows our hearts and the truth.

Hebrews 4:13 (NIV) - "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account."

With a spirit of humility and forgiveness, we must trust God as our vindicator. At times, we may need to address false accusations, but we do so with humility and leave our defense to the Lord. Forgive, so we do not harbor resentment.

3. Learn to Be Offense-Proof

Remember, as fallible people, we may offend others as well as be offended. Let us not be easily offended.

John 16:1 (NIV) - "All this I have told you so that you will not go astray."

The enemy uses grievances to create division and bring people into captivity. Let us guard our hearts as intercessors and pray this over our church. Forgiving others is essential to maintain a healthy, intimate relationship with Jesus and one another.

4. Choose to Be Forgiving

Forgiveness is key to restoring our relationship with Christ and others.

Matthew 6:12 (NIV) - "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

Forgiveness teaches us to live in harmony. It is an act of will, done in obedience to God's Word. God's forgiveness brings wholeness into our lives, as exemplified in the testimony of Corrie ten Boom.





5. Turn Accusation into Prayer

The enemy is the accuser of believers, accusing us before God, others, and ourselves. Each accusation can be turned into prayer, freeing us from the enemy's accusations.

James 2:13 (NIV) - "Because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!"

Let us rejoice in the opportunity to show mercy rather than adhering to strict justice. Finding freedom in Christ through forgiveness brings wholeness in God.



Discussion Questions

These questions could be done personally or as part of a group discussion.

1. As you reflect, ask the Lord if any offense lingers in your heart. Seek to forgive in God.
2. What is one key lesson you learn from Corrie ten Boom's story? 1. Please refer to this article.
<https://ca.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-forgiveness-of-corrie-ten-boom/>





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