

How do I relate to those who wrong me?

Key concept: Forgiveness

- Showing forgiveness is the mark of the believer...it's the gospel. Christ's died for our sins so we could be forgiven. (Rom 5.8) Eph 4.32 Forgive each other, just as Christ has forgiven you.
- Our own need to be right is the flip side of forgiveness... instead of forgiveness I judge, defend, avoid.
 - Mt. 18.21-35 Big debtor versus little debtor. How often should I forgive?
 - Matthew 6:15 Jesus says: If you do not forgive men their sins, your heavenly father will not forgive your sins.”
 - God's grace gives us two pre-requisites for a life of forgiveness.
 - Emotional humility
 - Emotional wealth
 - Balance in our approach
 - When people wrong us we surrender the right to pay back but do not overlook injustice
 - Our natural response is to say nothing on the outside and fume on the inside. The gospel approach is just the opposite

Definition of forgiveness:

- Forgiveness means giving up the right to seek repayment from the one who harmed you.
- In forgiveness you pay the debt: by refusing to hurt the other person, refusing to indulge in ill-will
- Forgiveness is granted before it is felt

Questions

- Matthew 18 describes the big and small debtor. What is the importance of knowing that we are big debtors? How does this influence the way we forgive?
- Romans 12.17-21 How should we respond to those who are hostile to us? What does it look like? Why should we do it?
- Matthew 5.23-24 and 18.15-17 On the basis of these passages, when is it your move to seek reconciliation when a relationship needs repair? What are some practical ways to carry out these two passages?
- What has been your experience with working through forgiveness with someone?