

Good morning and rather you are present in person or online, we thank you for joining us as we strive to local body helping all Believe, Live, and share the gospel.

Today, after service is **Serve Sunday** (serve/join a GG). Also, **Discover Omni** is *September 11th*, in the youth boiling at 11:45am. This morning, we will be continuing our short doctrinal series talking about ***the center piece of the gospel*** called **forgiveness**. Paul declares that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation making us one with Jesus, but the gospel is always the power of God conforming us to the likeness of Jesus.

We must remember, the gospel that saved us also works in and through us. This is amazing. God saved us also wants to work in us and through us. This is why Paul says in **Ephesians 2:8-10, 8** For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift— **9** not from works, so that no one can boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do. And as we begin to discuss last week about God and His forgiveness, know that, since we have received forgiveness from God, we must offer His forgiveness to others. Forgiveness should be seen as a good work done **by** God **after** our salvation and not a good work done **for** God **for** our salvation. This eternal truth never changes, but the truth is many in the room and watching on line struggle with offering His forgiveness given to us. I pray that the next two weeks will make it easier though not always easy.

Please turn to the Disciples Prayer in Matthew 6 and I want to pray this together but I will be focusing on one main point of this extraordinary prayer. So let's stand and pray this portion of Scripture together? **Matthew 6:9-15!**

9 "Therefore, you should pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
your name be honored as holy.

10 Your kingdom come.

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us today our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And do not bring us into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.

14 “For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will
forgive you as well.

15 But if you don’t forgive others, your Father will not forgive your
offenses. You may seated.

Did you guys recall last week when I said the Bible teaches two
kinds of forgiveness? God’s forgiveness and then our forgiveness.
We defined God’s forgiveness as

GOD’S FORGIVENESS:

Forgiveness is a commitment by the one true God to pardon
graciously those who repent and believe so that they are reconciled
to Him, although this commitment does not eliminate all
consequences. This kind of forgiveness occurs once—it’s both
judicial and relational and it happens at the moment of faith—we
are justified and adopted at the same time both now and forever.

But there’s a second kind, our forgiveness. understanding this can
be confusing and misleading which is why I took the time upfront
to explain it some. The second kind is more relational and yet still
eternal. Jesus said in His prayer in vv.12, 14-15, **12 And forgive us
our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors...Ok. Moment of
transparency.** Who in this room has forgiven others at the rate and
in the way God has forgiven you?

14 “For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father
will forgive you as well. Is this salvific or more of an out working of
our salvation. Understanding this is critical.

15 But if you don’t forgive others, your Father will not forgive your
offenses. Let me calm your nerves upfront. This kind of forgiveness
is not about heaven or hell. One can only be justified once by God
through Jesus. What Jesus is saying here, if you as a blood bought
son and daughter sin—for example, you fail to forgive someone—
you are still saved, but you can lose **the joy of that salvation**. The
opportunity to offer forgiveness will occur many times in our lives

—but no more than we will need it from God. But when we fail to extend what we constantly need, the joy of His salvation is lost. This is why David said in **Psalm 51:12**, **Restore the joy of your salvation to me, and sustain me by giving me a willing spirit.** For now, we will be asking God this everyday. But one day, God will take away every thing that could cause us to lose our joy with Him. **Revelation 21:3-4** says. **3** Then I heard a loud voice from the throne: Look, God's dwelling is with humanity, and he will live with them. They will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and will be their God. **4** He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; grief, crying, and pain will be no more, because the previous things have passed away. Is not joy, I mean complete joy one of the things Jesus says He wants to give us. **John 15:9-11**, **9** "As the Father has loved me, I have also loved you. Remain in my love. **10** If you keep my commands you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. **11** "I have told you these things so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This sounds crazy. It sounds ridiculous. We can have the same joy Jesus had but we forfeit it when we fail to offer His or true forgiveness to others. Also let me say, God's forgiveness is radical and like all His attributes, it is perfect. I like how one God said it, "**God's forgiveness is greater and more powerful than all the evil in the world and is extended to all people regardless of the magnitude of their sin.**" And as a Christian, we will see later in the series, we are called to forgive each other **just as** God has forgiven us. But before I define what **forgiveness is**, allow me to talk about this morning What Forgiveness is not. I found some of these in an article by **Focus on the family** that I thought were very helpful but added a twist to them all.

FORGIVENESS IS NOT A FEELING:

If you are waiting until **the feeling** to forgive comes upon you, it's unlikely to occur. No one feels like offering the gift of forgiveness. Forgiveness takes faith in God and is an act of obedience. **Romans 1:17b** The righteous live by faith and not feelings. I'm not saying

we shouldn't have feeling, I'm saying that our feelings shouldn't lead us, our faith in God should. You won't always feel like forgiving, especially if the hurt was deep and repetitive but because you believe in God and desire to prove your love for Him through obedience, we offer the gift of forgiveness to all. And no one can do this apart from faith in God since it will take God to do it.

Forgiveness is not a feeling, and

FORGIVENESS IS NOT WEAKNESS.

A lot of strength is required to acknowledge pain, declare it, and offer forgiveness to those who have hurt us. I know some of us may think we look weak when we choose to forgive, but do you recall in Luke 23 when they hung and crucified Jesus between two thieves, do you recall what Jesus said? **“Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing.”**

When Jesus, who had not sinned in deed to any one.

When Jesus, who had not sinned in word against no one,

When Jesus, who had not sinned in motives any towards anyone, asked His Father in heaven to forgive them. If that's weakness, God please, help me to be weak. But that's not weakness, that's humility. Jesus, on the cross is displaying a strength that no human flesh could ever generate. A strength that depends on God not only pray for forgive them, but reconcile them back to the Father.

Forgiveness is not a feeling.

Forgiveness is not weakness, and

FORGIVENESS IS NOT PRETENDING YOU WERE NOT HURT:

Walking around with a pretentious smile while hurting on the inside is not forgiveness. In Scripture, Jesus never pretended. When He was sad, He cried (**John 11:35**). When He was angry, He turned over the tables in the temple (**John 2:15-16**). Someone has betrayed your trust, damaged your soul or caused a loss. It is OK to recognize and feel the hurt instigated by another's behavior but it's never ok to respond in sin.

FORGIVENESS DOES NOT MEAN FORGETTING:

The phrase “forgive and forget” is not reality. As a matter of fact, it's humanly impossible, why? We are not God. Only an all-knowing God does not remember our sins. However, God's “not

remembering” is not what we usually think of as forgetfulness. God knows everything, and He forgets nothing. However, He can *choose* not to remember something. In human relationships, we can choose to dwell on the sins committed against us. The question is how do we to where we stop dwelling and responding to past wrongs against us? Answer: When we allow the Holy Spirit to sanctify us in this area over and over again.

Sanctification refers to the process by which we become increasingly like our Lord and Savior in thought, deed, and action. The key to winning a mental victory over bitterness and hurt done against us is to continually fix our eyes on Jesus Christ. The writer of Hebrews encourages us to **keep our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith**. As we do, we will respond in Christlike fashion.

Illustration: Incident of God asking me to forgive some who had sinned against me because I didnt respond in Christlike manner.

Forgiveness is not a feeling.

Forgiveness is not weakness.

Forgiveness is not forgetting,

Forgiveness is not pretending you are not hurt.

FORGIVENESS DOES NOT MEAN CONDONING OR EXCUSING A WRONG:

And it doesn't minimize or justify the wrong. We can offer forgiveness to a person without excusing the act or words of the person that has hurt us. When one sins against, we are to rebuke them of their sin. **Luke 17:3** says, **3 Be on your guard. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.**

The word **rebuke** here means to express strong disapproval to someone. When we are sinned against, we can and should rebuke in love. Jesus gave us the perfect example of this when he rebukes Peter in Matthew 16. Jesus rebukes Peter by saying, **“Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me because you're not thinking about God's concerns but human concerns.”** I don't know how He did it, but Jesus rebuke Peter and Peter continue to follow Him. Imagine if I did this to you, who would continue to follow me. I know, right. You probably would not continue to follow me. But Peter did. And listen, people probably wont accept your offer of

forgiveness after you rebuke them, but we should. For the hope of healthy relationships and reconciliation. We are to rebuke, but only the Holy Spirit can convict and hopefully get us back on the path of reconciliation as we pursue and enjoy Jesus along the way. Well, this is part 1 of this sermon. We will do part 2 next Sunday. Let's pray.