9/27/26 Sermon

Forgiving Is Hard. Benefits of Forgiving

Part One: What Are the Benefits of Forgiveness?

1. I Understand What God Did for Me

- Would you be able to forgive the person you love most if they betrayed you in the worst way?
- Would you be able to forgive someone else who betrayed the person you love most in the worst way?
- Forgiveness is the hardest thing God had to do for us. He literally sent His Son to die in the most brutal way in order for us to be forgiven.
- God watched His Son get betrayed, abandoned, ostracized, beaten, and handed over to be killed.
- Whatever we have to go through to forgive someone else will never be as difficult as it was for God to forgive us. It cost Jesus His life.

2. It Makes Me More Like Jesus Christ

- Jesus did not have to come down from Heaven to earth.
- Jesus Himself did not want to die.
- Likewise, we must lay down our own desires.

3. It Brings Joy to God's Heart

- Think about when your own children forgive each other — how much joy does that bring you?
- In the same way, God's heart swells overwhelmingly with joy when we forgive.
- There's nothing better in this world than to bring joy to God's heart.

4. I Free Myself from Pain and Heartache

- Resentment always hurts you more than the person you're bitter against.
- When you hold onto past bitterness, the bigger and stronger you grow it.
- You're allowing the past to have a tight grip on your present.
- The worst thing is, it's self-imposed.
- Christ has given you the key to unlock that chain.
- Science shows that resentment causes literal physical ailments.

5. It Shows That I Have Truly Repented of My Sins

Matthew 18:23–35 — The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

- This parable is an analogy of God's forgiveness toward us.
- According to Jesus, if you haven't forgiven someone else, then you haven't really repented toward God.
- The readiness to forgive someone else is a sign of true repentance.
- *Repentance* in Greek literally means to change your mind and turn away from your sin.
- You will never experience or know God's love as intensely and personally until you forgive.

6. God Will Forgive Me

Matthew 6:14–15

- If we want God's forgiveness, we must forgive others.

Part Two: How to Forgive Like God

1. Forget the Offense

- We must forgive as God forgives us: our transgressions and iniquities are cast into the deepest parts of the sea and remembered no more.
- Most humans can forgive but never forget — that's not what God does or what Scripture says.
- We must forgive completely.
- When we stop doing what God wants us to do, we become God.

2. Never Cease to Forgive

- Jesus told Peter there is no limit to how many times we are to forgive.
- We are to forgive each other no matter how many times we have been wronged, even if it's by the same person.
- "Forgiveness is not an occasional act; it is a permanent attitude." — Martin Luther King Jr.

3. Release Your Offender

- According to Scripture, we all deserve to be punished; we deserve death.
- When Jesus died on the Cross, God released us — He lifted off our punishment.
- It's time for us to release our offender.
- We can either **rehearse** it (hold onto resentment) or **release** it, as God released us.
- Remember: we cannot do it on our own, but God can. We need God's power.

> **Question for Reflection**
>
> *Who does God want me to forgive?*