



## BECOME A PERSON OF FORGIVENESS – PART 2

### SUMMARY:

Last week we began our discussion on becoming people of forgiveness. We learned that forgiveness is a command. We also learned that each one of us is in need of forgiveness which has been granted to us thanks to Jesus. As people who have been forgiven, we can forgive others.

This week we continue the conversation with this thought: We become stormproof as we learn to live for God's forgiveness. In this message, Pastor Paul shares the parable of the unforgiving servant. This servant had a large debt he owed to his master; one he would probably never be able to pay. Incredibly, the master forgives the debt! In the next breath, the servant turns around and demands that his fellow servant pay him the much smaller debt that was owed to him. The unforgiving servant berates the other servant and has him thrown in prison. Although he had been forgiven of much, he was not willing to live from that forgiveness and extend it to others.

Jesus shows us a better way. Jesus embodies forgiveness and invites us into His power to forgive. He reminds us that forgiveness is a gift and an essential part of our growth as Christ-followers. Finally, we are not left to figure it out on our own, Jesus empowers us to be people of forgiveness.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

In his message, Pastor Paul shared this quote from Henri Nouwen: *To forgive another person from the heart is an act of liberation. We set that person free from the negative bonds that exist between us. We say, "I know longer hold your offense against you." But there's more. We also free ourselves from the burden of being the "offended one." As long as we do not forgive those who have wounded us, we carry them with us or, worse, pull them as a heavy load. The great temptation is to cling in anger to our enemies and then define ourselves as being offended and wounded by them. Forgiveness, therefore, liberates not only the other but also ourselves. It is the way to the freedom of the children of God.*

*Have you been carrying offense about anything? Does it feel burdensome? What is burdensome about carrying that offense?*

Read Luke 23:24.

*What was happening when Jesus made this statement?*

# STORMPROOF

FINDING FAITH IN LIFE'S DIFFICULTIES

*Why is it remarkable that Jesus made this statement of forgiveness given what was going on around him?*

Read Matthew 6:14 and Luke 6:37. Forgiveness results in forgiveness. The forgiveness spoken of here is not about salvation, but about our fellowship with God as part of our discipleship.

*How does God's forgiveness help us forgive others?*

*What happens when we don't forgive others? How does unforgiveness disrupt our relationship with God?*

*How do we grow as disciples as a result of forgiving others?*

Read Colossians 3:12-14. We are called to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and faithfulness.

*How do these characteristics of our new self in Christ help us forgive?*

*How does love unite all these characteristics?*

Our vertical relationship with God (and the forgiveness we receive) is linked with our horizontal relationships with one another (and the forgiveness we give). Forgiveness does not mean we excuse sin or evil. Rather, forgiveness releases people from obligations in their wrongdoing against you and releases yourself from harboring bitterness and anger. What makes this all possible is the forgiveness we have received from God in Jesus. When we forgive, we are truly following Jesus, the One who has forgiven us.

End your time by sharing if there is anyone in your life you need to forgive. Pray over one another, first thanking God for the forgiveness we have all received through Jesus and then that the Holy Spirit would empower us to take that first step towards forgiveness of those around us who need it. Commit to reading Colossians 3:12-13 every day this week and put on what Christ has already given you.