



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: Good and Beautiful and Kind: Forgiveness

Speaker: Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor

Scripture: Matthew 18:21-35

²¹ Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

²² Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.^[a]”

²³ “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold^[b] was brought to him. ²⁵ Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

²⁶ “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ ²⁷ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

²⁸ “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins.^[c] He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

²⁹ “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

³⁰ “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³¹ When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

³² “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³ Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ ³⁴ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

³⁵ “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”
(NIV)

Sermon Outline:

The world is made whole by people who know how to forgive. Forgiveness it is the essence of the Christian life.

We carry a debt before God too overwhelming to pay.

You can be forgiven but still in prison. True freedom is in giving expression to the forgiveness you have received.

Forgiveness does not mean:

1. Forgetting what someone has done.
2. There are no consequences to what others have done.
3. No longer feeling the pain of grieving.
4. Reconciliation.
5. Doesn’t mean things will be as they once were.

When you are asking for forgiveness, keep the following in mind:

1. Listen to and empathize with the other person's hurt.
2. Make a sincere statement of regret and acknowledge harmful actions.
3. Make restitution for the pain caused.
4. Prevent repetition of the injury.

In the act of forgiveness, we are granted the inner freedom from allowing the wound inflicted from another to be the primary and permanent point of reference from which we relate to the world.

How do we become people who live free?

1. To forgive is to trust in the truth of the Jesus story of death and resurrection.
2. We recognize that forgiveness is something we do over and over.
3. Remember the God that has forgiven you in Christ.
4. A prayer for those not ready to forgive: Lord, I'm not ready to forgive this person, but help me to want to forgive.

God longs for your freedom and liberation.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday, Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor, continues our series entitled *Good and Beautiful and Kind*. Today Pastor Rich explores what it means to forgive, what the process of forgiveness looks like, and how forgiveness is foundational to the gospel.

Sermon Questions:

1. Do you feel an invitation from Christ in today's scripture passage? Do any of the words resonate with you? If so, why?
2. When you read Jesus's words about forgiving seventy-seven times, how do you feel?
3. How could it be possible that the forgiven person treated his fellow servant harshly even after being forgiven?
4. How often do you think about the forgiveness of God in your life? What difference has this made?
5. Rich mentioned that it's possible to be forgiven yet still live behind the prison bars of unforgiveness. When have you personally observed this to be true?
6. Which of these four statements most challenges your thinking about forgiveness?
 - Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting.
 - Forgiveness doesn't mean there are no consequences.
 - Forgiveness doesn't mean you no longer feel the pain of grieving.
 - Forgiveness doesn't always mean reconciliation with another person.