

Forgiveness Sermon Series #4 (PASTOR MARIE'S LAST SUNDAY)

Week #3 (6-13-21) Baggage of Forgiveness

Key Words: FORGIVENESS

Memory Verse : Matthew 6:14 "Be kind and compassionate to one another, FORGIVING each other, just as in Christ God FORGAVE you."

Scripture :Genesis 33:1-11

Jacob looked up and there was Esau, coming with his four hundred men; so he divided the children among Leah, Rachel and the two female servants. ²He put the female servants and their children in front, Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph in the rear. ³He himself went on ahead and bowed down to the ground seven times as he approached his brother.

⁴But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept. ⁵Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children. "Who are these with you?" he asked.

Jacob answered, "They are the children God has graciously given your servant."

⁶Then the female servants and their children approached and bowed down. ⁷Next, Leah and her children came and bowed down. Last of all came Joseph and Rachel, and they too bowed down.

⁸Esau asked, "What's the meaning of all these flocks and herds I met?"

"To find favor in your eyes, my lord," he said.

⁹But Esau said, "I already have plenty, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself."

¹⁰"No, please!" said Jacob. "If I have found favor in your eyes, accept this gift from me. For to see your face is like seeing the face of God, now that you have received me favorably. ¹¹Please accept the present that was brought to you, for God has been gracious to me and I have all I need." And because Jacob insisted, Esau accepted it.

Application/Message WOW! In our last lesson, Esau was so mad at his brother Jacob tricking him out of his birthright and blessing, that he wanted to kill Jacob. BUT, God knew how to deal with Esau's anger. God blessed Esau so much with lots of animals, family members, and success that he became rich while Jacob was gone. Esau realized that God loved him just as much as God loved Jacob. Esau realized that hating was only making him upset all the time. So Esau FORGAVE Jacob!

What does FORGIVING someone mean? It means that he prayed to God and told Him about how he felt. Then Esau prayed for God to take away his anger and his hurt, and to let him love his brother in spite of what happened between them. God did just that! Esau welcomed Jacob and his family with open, loving, happy arms because he had learned that the power of FORGIVENESS is greater and more freeing, than the power of anger or hate.

Sometimes we don't get along with people in our family, but we know that makes God sad. God wants us to try our hardest to FORGIVE and love them like Esau FORGAVE and loved Jacob. He didn't hold on to his anger or his grudge, and become a mean and bitter man because he FORGAVE. We can read in the Bible about someone like Esau and his brother Jacob becoming great friends again, all because God

showed Esau that hating his brother was wrong. Instead, FORGIVENESS healed all the hurts of both brothers.

God wants US to FORGIVE those who may do wrong to us, too. We can NOT do this by ourselves. We need God's power (*His Holy Spirit*) within us. Guess what? When we believe that Jesus died for our sins, and was buried, and resurrected (*came back to life*), so that we could live with Him forever - we have His RESURRECTION POWER (*that gave Him new life*) living *inside of us!* We have a new life!

Choosing NOT to be willing to forgive others, keeps feelings of hurt and anger going and growing inside us. Unforgiveness hurts God AND our hearts. FORGIVING puts the situation into God's hands and you let go of its pain, and you let God handle it in His way. FORGIVING brings love and joy back into your life. Let's pray and ask God to give you the strength to forgive when it seems impossible.

Hands on Activities: *Forgiveness is important to learn early in life because holding grudges can have a significant physical and emotional impact on children and adults. Forgiveness doesn't necessarily mean forgetting what happened to you or condoning inappropriate behavior. It means that you choose to forgive the person who hurt or wronged you in some way. Interactive youth activities are an effective method to teach young people how to forgive each other.*

Creative Artistic Activities to Promote Forgiveness

1. **Use artistic activities to teach lessons on FORGIVENESS.** Have the children draw or paint the emotion of anger or hurt. Next, have the children paint or draw the feeling of forgiving someone and compare the differences. Alternatively, children can create a collage of the feeling of forgiveness. Read the Bible story of Esau and Jacob, a child who offends his brother. Ask the children to write two endings to the story. One ending should emphasize forgiveness and the other should focus on revenge. Discuss the consequences of the two reactions.

2. Heavy Load

Put heavy objects such as rocks or large books into a sack after labeling each item with words such as **hurt, resentment, hate, revenge, anger and bitterness**. Ask children to take turns carrying around the heavy sack. Tell the children that carrying around feelings such as anger and unforgiveness in their hearts is an even heavier load to bear than carrying the heavy sack. Explain that if they choose to forgive the person who hurt them or offended them in some way, then all the bad feelings disappear and they will be free of the burden of carrying them around. (*remember, though, that this is a process and may take time*) Tell them **they** are the ones who are hurt the most when they choose not to forgive.

3. Practice FORGIVENESS Opportunities

- What has recently happened that makes you upset with someone? Can you say "I'm sorry" to a family member or friend, maybe share a hug and then mend your broken relationship with kind words or deeds? That's practicing FORGIVENESS!
- If you aren't good with words, can you draw a picture or write a letter or card that tells the person you wronged, or who wronged you, that you are sorry? That's practicing FORGIVENESS!
- If someone is mean to you can you model kindness to show that you care about them? That's practicing FORGIVENESS!

4. Two Special Words to Learn:

After you read the following words, think about how they were shown in the story of Jacob, Esau, Isaac, and Rebekah.

- GRACE

The letters in the word **GRACE** help us to understand its meaning. **God's Riches**

At Christ's Expense. We have been given God's grace through our faith in Jesus Christ. **God's Riches** are FORGIVENESS FOR OUR SINS and the BLESSINGS OF LIFE WITH GOD FOREVER. **Christ's Expense** is His suffering and death IN OUR PLACE. In other words, because Jesus offered Himself in our place, we are "getting what we don't deserve." New Life now and eternally.

- MERCY

On the other hand, **MERCY** is "not getting what we do deserve." We deserve Death because of our sin against God.

PRAYER: Dear Jesus, sometimes I feel so angry or hurt. Only You can take those feelings away. But I need to tell You about them and to ask for Your help. If I am at fault, please forgive me. If someone else is at fault, please forgive them and help me forgive them, too. In Jesus' name I ask this. Amen

Songs: (GREAT Words, sign language, music from "**You forgive me**" at <https://youtu.be/LO-2fm7IKcU>)

*You take all the pieces of my life / Put 'em back together, make it alright / Oh... You forgive me.
Only You can heal my broken heart, Make all things new with a brand-new start
Oh... You forgive me., (You forgive me.)*

*I try so hard to do things right / But I make the wrong choice sometimes //And You forgive me.
No one knows me, God, like You / You see who I am, not what I do //And You forgive me.*

(REPEAT FROM THE START)

*You take all the pieces of my life / Put 'em back together, make it alright / Oh... You forgive me.
Only You can heal my broken heart/ Make all things new with a brand-new start
Oh... You forgive me. / You forgive me./ You forgive me....*

Another song : Jesus loves me

Jesus Loves me, this I know
For the Bible tells me so
Little ones to Him belong
They are weak,
But He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me (3x)
The Bible tells me so.

Optional Activities

- Watch this *Douglas Talk* about "Why forgive?" at <https://youtu.be/yXP6VqPygQE>
- Watch the **Berenstain Bears** story **The Forgiving Tree** at <https://youtu.be/r0cH9ylEQys>
- Watch "**Esau Sells His Birthright**" Bible Animation (Genesis 25-27) by Cartoonworks (youtube.com)

(Permission Statement: All animations are available for free for Sunday School, Worship, ... and personal use.)

- **Find a quiet place to spend time talking with God** about anything on your heart. If you have things that have caused you hurt, shame, lack of focus, anger, unforgiveness (like we've talked about in our lessons) share them with Him. Let Him know your thankfulness, love and joys too. He ALWAYS listens. Be sure to sit still and listen for Him to talk to your heart too. Thank Him for His presence in your life.
- **Write a letter to Pastor Marie** telling her how she has been special to you .
- **Write a letter to Pastor Marie and her family** wishing her blessings at her new church in Circleville, OH
- **Write a letter to Zander** wishing him many blessings as he moves to Circleville and makes new friends and goes to a new school.