

Student Guide

Forgiveness

Key Verses:

Mark 11:25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

Matthew 6:15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

INTRODUCTION

Today we will discuss the powerful principle and practice of **Forgiveness**. We, the Harvest Life family, are currently experiencing a spiritual transition and one of the first items on the agenda is going through the process of forgiveness. As we seek to walk in righteousness and to be aligned with God's will and His Word – it is necessary to repent and work through the levels of forgiveness so that we may access the Lord's grace and mercy.

This Sunday School lesson is designed to provide insight concerning our transition to the next level of living and ministry through the doors of forgiveness.

I. What is Forgiveness?

Forgiveness is a spiritual principle that is a two-sided coin. There is a challenge on the one hand to ask for forgiveness and a challenge on the other to actually forgive. Each side is independent of the other in the sight of God. In other words – just because you humbly ask for forgiveness – does not mean the other person will respond in a Godly manner and forgive you. When each party is in agreement, great power, peace, and reconciliation are released on both sides – which is ideal. God also grants victory for those individuals that don't get the "expected" response because of their heart to reconcile.

Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

II. God's Starting Place: Forgiveness

Understand that forgiveness is the "place" where God does potent foundational work in our souls. In many cases, the devil uses unforgiveness to keep people out of church, out of

Fall 2021 Quarter: Spiritual Maturity

ministry, out of fellowship with the saints, suppressed from using their gifts and talents, “jacked up” in their relationships or divorced, and in financial debt. Forgiveness, on the other hand, releases individuals to serve in a “heartfelt” manner in giving, laboring in ministry, worshiping, participating in outreach, and praying. Forgiveness is so vital to God that He said that even if you are praying and have not forgiven someone – stop praying, get up, find that person and forgive them.

Mark 11:25-26 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

2 Chronicles 7:14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

III. Victory Through Forgiveness

Trust God with what He is doing in your life and go through the process of forgiveness. Great things will come to pass as we follow God’s Word and His direction by the Holy Spirit. Triumph belongs to the child of God – but we must endure in righteousness.

Psalms 119:71 It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

IV. FINAL REFLECTIONS

Throughout the New Testament, Jesus speaks of the importance of Christians forgiving or showing mercy towards others. Jesus used the parable of the unmerciful servant (Matthew 18:21-35) to say that we should forgive without limits. The parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) is perhaps the best known parable about forgiveness and refers to God's forgiveness for His people. As we go through this transition to the next level of ministry and living, let’s embrace this very powerful tool for the Local Church and the Body of Christ. Our Lord Jesus said this to the Apostle Paul during his encounter and conversion in Acts 26:18:

*“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive **forgiveness of sins**, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”*