

Forgiveness: Release. Reset. Renew

2 Corinthians 2:5-11

November 21, 2021

Summary: in Corinth someone's sin caused grief to the apostle Paul and the whole church. This may be the man referred to earlier (1 Cor. 5:1-6). After imposing church discipline, the individual repented. Paul now urges the church to forgive and lovingly restore. Failure to forgive would give Satan an advantage over the congregation.

1. Our church's response to repentant sinners

Extend forgiveness = "**grace** -gift" (Eph. 4:32)

Comfort = encourage (1 Thes. 5:11; Heb. 3:13)

Reaffirm love = *agape* one another (1 John 4:7-8)

2. Satan has two go-to **strategies** and we know them

a. You are too **good** to sin

- All people are basically good anyway, right?
- Besides, sin is not a thing anymore, is it?

b. You are too **bad** to be forgiven

- Being a sinner, disqualifies you
- Forgiveness must be **earned**

Accepting and forgiving are different processes. We accept persons for the good that they *are* or *do*. We forgive persons for the evil that they did or caused.

Excusing and forgiving are different processes. We excuse people when we no longer hold them accountable. We forgive people when we hold them accountable but do not excuse.

Tolerating and forgiving are different processes. We tolerate what another has done when we overlook or ignore. We forgive what we cannot tolerate, will not overlook or ignore.

Forgetting and forgiving are different processes. We do not need to forgive if we can simply forget. Forgetting is passive, avoidant, letting go. We do not forget when we forgive, but the meaning of the memory changes. Forgiving is active and aware, recognizing the injury and owning the pain, reaching out to reframe, reconstruct it.

Helping People Forgive, David Augsburger

Life Group Homework

1. What is one thing from today's sermon that you found helpful, eye-opening, or troubling?
2. READ Galatians 6:1; Hebrews 13:11-12; 1 John 5:16. What is the goal of church discipline?
3. READ Luke 15:11-32 aloud. How in this parable does Jesus encourage sinners without encouraging sin? What could the church in Corinth learn from this? What can we learn?
4. Which one of Satan's strategies—no sin, or no forgiveness—is a trap you have fallen into? What is the solution?
5. *agree/disagree*
Relationships are not destroyed by sin—we all have sin—but because of lack of forgiveness.
6. People often confuse forgiveness with accepting, excusing, tolerating or forgetting. Reread the sermon notes and explain in your own words the different processes.