

LIVING for GIVING

#11 “MAKING UP IS HARD TO DO”

The Vineyard Church of Conroe

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Sermon Outline Notes

¹² “Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³ Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.”
Colossians 3:12-13 NLT

The Kingdom Life is INACCESSIBLE WITHOUT FORGIVENESS

I. Ephesians 2:14-16 NLT

¹⁴For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us. ¹⁵He did this by ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations. He made peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new people from the two groups. ¹⁶Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God by means of his death on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death.

The Goal of Forgiveness is RECONCILIATION OF RELATIONSHIP.

In the Christian account of things, we forgive because we love—specifically, because we love our debtors, our offenders, and even our enemies. Forgiveness between human beings is one crucial step in a larger process whose final goal is the embrace of former enemies in a community of love. -M Volf

II. Matthew 5:23-24 NLT

³ “So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, ²⁴leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

Reconciliation REQUIRES REPENTANCE.

Repentance is important, even indispensable, and it is indispensable because forgiveness is an event between people, not just an individual’s change of feelings, attitudes, or actions. Instead of being a condition of forgiveness, however, repentance is its necessary consequence. - M. Volf

III. Numbers 5:6b–7,8b NLT

^{6b} If any of the people—men or women—betray the LORD by doing wrong to another person, they are guilty. ⁷ They must confess their sin and make full restitution for what they have done, adding an additional 20 percent and returning it to the person who was wronged... ^{8b} Those who are guilty must also bring a ram as a sacrifice, and they will be purified and made right with the LORD.

Restitution is a sign that REPENTANCE IS REAL.

Restitution is always possible. And it is mostly necessary too—not as a demand prior to forgiveness but as a fruit of forgiveness and a fitting sign that repentance is genuine. What kind of repentance would it be if you were willing to admit to wrong, but unwilling to cease benefiting from it or unwilling to relieve the victim's suffering? -Miroslav Volf

IV. Romans 5:7-8,10 NLT

⁷ Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. ⁸ But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners... ¹⁰ For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son.

Forgiveness of the Unrepentant demonstrates THE SCANDALOUS NATURE OF THE KINGDOM

We are so used to hearing about the indiscriminate nature of God's forgiveness that our moral sensibilities are dulled to its scandalousness. But scandalous it is. The scandalousness of God's indiscriminate forgiveness hits us even harder when we are called on to imitate it. - Miroslav Volf