



SATURDAY 07.02.11 Matthew 18:21-35

Peter thought he could guess what Jesus would teach. The rabbis said you should forgive three times. Peter stretched it - more than doubled it. And Jesus said, "Not even close." Forgiveness is not about counting. It's a continual way of life.

- Myron Augsburger wrote, "Forgiveness is never easy; it is hard. It is the most difficult thing in the universe." Forgiving the same person seven times often seems plenty to us! How does your un-forgiveness effect your health? Your personal life? Your job?
- If forgiveness is a habit, what steps can you take in your every-day life to take on that habit? How might your life change as a result?



SUNDAY 07.03.11 John 14:26

Jesus referred to God's Holy Spirit as a comforter. This Comforter was being sent to live inside of each Christian; to offer us encouragement, assistance, and comfort from the inside out!

- We each experience a certain amount of pain in this fallen world. And we each have our preferred sources of comfort during our suffering. Some of these sources are healthy and some are unhealthy. Where do you go for comfort when you find yourself suffering?
- How can the Holy Spirit bring you comfort and healing in your areas of un-forgiveness?



GROW. PRAY. STUDY.

Top Ten: The Stories Behind the Songs - Weekly Guide 6/27/11

Title: "7 X 70"

Singer/Songwriter: Chris August

Album: No Far Away

Song #10

Matthew 18: 21-22

²¹ Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" ²² "No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven."

Micah 7: 18-19

Where is the God who can compare with you - wiping the slate clean of guilt, turning a blind eye, a deaf ear, to the past sins of your purged and precious people? You don't nurse your anger and don't stay angry long, for mercy is your specialty. That's what you love the most. And compassion is on its way to us. You'll stamp out our wrongdoing. You'll sink our sins to the bottom of the ocean.

Things I'd like to remember from this week's study:



TUESDAY 06.28.11 Matthew 5:38-48

Jesus' teachings about how we are to treat our enemies is very contrary to today's thinking, isn't it? Tit-for-tat is a mind-set that is, more often than not, the norm in today's society. And yet, Jesus calls us to live generously, telling us to turn the other cheek when someone wrongs us.

- In Jesus' day, many rabbis quoted Lev. 19:18 ("Love your neighbor as yourself"), and then added, "and hate your enemies." Jesus said that love to the just and the unjust, love for those who are evil as well as those who are good, is God's way. Can you "love" someone even if you don't like them? How?
- Think about how you treat your family and think about how you treat strangers. In what ways do your actions differ? Do you need to adjust some of your actions towards those you love?



WENESDAY 06.29.11 Ephesians 2:11- 22

Almost all conflict happens because of some kind of difference. As Jesus' message spread through the Mediterranean world, the early church became more and more diverse. But Jesus pulled off an amazing feat: he "put to death" the hostility of different groups. Our differences still create hostilities today, which result in resentment and bitterness - and Jesus' power is still at work.

- The main issue the Ephesians faced was the distrust and contempt between Jews and Gentiles. In a global society, what are some of the differences that trigger hostility, bitterness and unforgiveness in your heart?
- How can Jesus' forgiveness help make you willing to tackle the hard work of changing long-standing attitudes, feelings and actions?



THURSDAY 06.30.11 Ephesians 4:25-32

"We are all members of one body," Paul said. It's clear he was talking mainly to those in the Christian community. Wow - so even in church it's quite possible to meet "bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice." Even with fellow believers, we need the call to forgive each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

- Being as honest as you can, who are the Christians you know who most often and most deeply "fill your backpack with rocks"? Pray for them. Ask God to give you practical, realistic steps to "be kind and compassionate," in ways that are healthy for you and for them.
- Again being as honest as you can, in what ways do you at times see yourself be unloving and hurtful to your brothers and sisters in Christ? What steps can you take to grow in these areas?



FRIDAY 07.01.11 Matthew 6:9-13

When Jesus' disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray, Jesus gave them this example that we commonly refer to as The Lord's Prayer. Prayer is a powerful tool that Jesus wants us to use to bring healing in areas of un-forgiveness in our lives.

- What does it mean to "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"? Do you want God to forgive you in the same manner that you forgive others? Why or why not?
- Is it possible to forgive someone when they have not asked for forgiveness? In what ways does your pride stand in the way of truly forgiving someone who has wronged you?
