

Study Guide for the Week of August 27, 2006

Forgiveness: The Real F Word—Collateral Damage

This study guide is designed to help you to become more familiar with the Bible. Study these passages on your own, with a friend, or with a group. If you or someone you know needs a Bible, please take one from under a chair in the Worship Center. They are there for you to take home and use! Sermon manuscripts are available at www.spwired.com.

Monday. We'll begin this week with the passage Aaron used on Sunday. **Read Matthew 18:21-22** in the New Testament. Peter was trying to impress Jesus by doubling (plus 1) the number of times a person was expected to forgive another. He asked if 7 times was enough. Jesus says no, seventy-seven times (or seventy times seven). Jesus was not trying to give an exact number of times we should forgive others. He was saying that we should be ready to forgive so often that we lose track. It should become a way of life. Have you chosen this way of life or some other way? Have you set a number of times that you allow yourself to forgive someone who has hurt you? **Read Matthew 18:23-27.** What is your impression of king in this story? What is your impression of the servant whose debt was cancelled?

Tuesday. **Read Matthew 18:28-35.** This is the rest of the story. Why might this servant who was forgiven so much, be so unready to forgive someone who owed him so little? What motivates people to be unforgiving? When have you been most unforgiving? Verses 34 and 35 are some of the harshest words of Jesus. Remember that he was speaking as a prophet here and was striving to get his point across very clearly. What is that point? What is the result of unforgiveness in us?

Wednesday. **Read Matthew 6:9-15.** This is one version of what we commonly call the Lord's Prayer. Some translations use the word "debts" others use the word "trespasses," the meaning is the same. This reference to debts or trespasses is a call to receive God's forgiveness and then be about the business of forgiving others. Notice that after teaching this prayer Jesus takes time to reemphasize the power of forgiveness and how important it is. Notice that forgiveness is not a suggestion; Jesus is speaking here as our commander. He means for us to understand that following his words here are not an option. Do you treat them as an option or a command?

Thursday. **Read Luke 23:32-34.** Jesus was nailed a cross. This was after he had been whipped, beaten, spat on and humiliated. Yet he forgave those who tortured him. How is this a model for us practice forgiveness? In the email survey the number one response to the question: "What is the one thing you could never forgive somebody for doing?" was hurting a family member. Remember that Jesus was crucified for your sins, so each of us is responsible for his death, but God forgave us. How could he do that? What does that mean for us? **Read Colossians 3:13.** This reiterates the point of forgiveness. How would you put this into your own words and experiences?

Friday. **Read Luke 6:27-38.** What three principles can you draw from this passage? How can you apply them in your daily lives? Spend time in prayer asking for God's forgiveness and then asking for him to help you apply forgiveness into the lives of others.