

Building a Christian Community

"Forgive One Another"

Ephesians 4:32

Introduction

The past few weeks, we've been talking about what it takes to build a solid Christian community and how crucial it is for us to be involved in one another's lives. Our base text is John 13:34,35.

1. In Ephesians 4:32, Paul writes, "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, _____ one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."
2. Forgiveness is the only way to preserve _____ in relationships with sinful people.
3. _____ alone allows you to let go of grievances, grudges, hatred, and resentment.

I. Avoid Bitterness

4. Bitterness is prolonged retributive _____ toward another person because of an offense committed.
5. The root of bitterness is always somehow tied to an _____.
6. The irony is that the real cause of bitterness is about you and how you _____ to the offense.
7. While bitterness is usually evident to everyone in its advanced stages, it is generally very subtle in the _____ stages.
8. Bitterness has absolutely no impact on the offender, but it will _____ you!
9. The first symptom of bitterness is you try to _____ your anger.

10. Another symptom is when you aggressively pursue all the _____ until you're seething with anger and hostility.
11. Bitter people will try to make themselves less _____ by not being available for fellowship.
12. Anger is an empowering _____, it feels good, but it has a short-term shelf life.
13. It's better to focus on _____ towards God and forgiveness towards others.
14. Bitterness drains your reserves and causes you to become more vulnerable to _____ and negative behavior.
15. Bitterness affects all your other _____.
16. Long-term bitterness will _____ your personality.
17. For Christians, the most disturbing consequence of bitterness is _____ because we value relational closeness with God above all else.
18. We need to learn how to practice _____ forgiveness towards all of our offenders!

II. Extend Forgiveness

19. Secondly, we need to learn how to _____ forgiveness to offenders.
20. The first misconception is about what forgiveness involves, and the second is that they are simply _____ to forgive.
21. Forgiveness does not deny the offense actually occurred, nor does it deny the offender's _____ or the painful effects.
22. Biblical forgiveness is _____ and forthright.

23. Biblical forgiveness works to _____ and help the offender.
24. Forgiveness is a _____, not a feeling.
25. It's crucial to your own health and well-being that you lay down the right to _____ your offender.
26. If you insist on payback yourself, you wind up usurping _____ role.
27. For a believer to harbor unforgiveness is _____ because God has forgiven you of far more and far greater offenses against Him.

III. Receive Forgiveness

28. Asking and receiving God's forgiveness is _____ in learning to forgive others.
29. Experiencing God's _____ is what motivates us to forgive others.
30. Receiving God's _____ is the biblical way you to relate to others with grace.
31. Forgiving does not mean _____.
32. Biblical forgiveness begins with God declaring that you are forgiven and with your choice to _____ that forgiveness.
33. Unfortunately you can't eradicate offenses from your _____, but you can refuse to focus on the offense.
34. Forgiveness does not passively tolerate _____ or injury or naively agree to trust an untrustworthy offender.
35. Forgiveness is something we extend to others because we know how liberating it is to be _____.
36. Trust is something that is _____.

37. Forgiveness does allow for disciplinary and protective measures (including legal prosecution) for _____ rather than retaliatory reasons.

38. The primary reason to forgive others is to _____ God.

Conclusion

39. Forgiveness is not the same as _____.

40. Reconciliation is the mutual _____ of both parties to come together again.

The only difference between the word, Bitter and Better is the letter I. If you can get past yourself, you can get rid of your bitterness and become a better person! It's up to you!

ANSWERS

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| 1. Forgiving | 24. Choice |
| 2. Closeness | 25. Payback |
| 3. Forgiveness | 26. God' |
| 4. Anger | 27. Hypocrisy |
| 5. Offense | 28. Crucial |
| 6. Respond | 29. Grace |
| 7. Early | 30. Forgiveness |
| 8. Destroy | 31. Forgetting |
| 9. Justify | 32. Receive |
| 10. Negatives | 33. Memory |
| 11. Vulnerable | 34. Abuse |
| 12. Emotion | 35. Forgiveness |
| 13. Gratitude | 36. Earned |
| 14. Depression | 37. Redemptive |
| 15. Relationships | 38. Represent |
| 16. Poison | 39. Reconciliation |
| 17. Spiritual | 40. agreement |
| 18. Biblical | |
| 19. Extend | |
| 20. Unwilling | |
| 21. Responsibility | |
| 22. Honest | |
| 23. Restore | |