



Forgiveness is something that we can hardly give to those who have hurt us. It seems like our minds are built in such a way that we ONLY FORGET the things we're SUPPOSED TO REMEMBER. But there is a difference in REMEMBERING the pains and HOLDING on to them. Remembering is just a memory. We can't do anything about those. They're stuck in there. However, we can let go of the bitterness and resentment that builds up around those memories.

FOUR QUESTIONS ON FORGIVENESS:

- Why do we need forgiveness in our families?
- What foundation do we build forgiveness in our family on?
- What will forgiveness in our family look like?
- How can we have God's kind of forgiveness?

Why do we need forgiveness in our families?

Families are made up of people. And people are going to mess things up. Most of the time, the things we mess up are small things. Families are made up of people. And one of the undeniable truths of life is that people sin. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (NIV)." For your information, when we sin, we not only sin against God, we sin against others. ? There are no closed doors when it comes to sin. Sin never affects only the person who commits the sin. Sin always impacts someone else. There is no such thing as hidden sin. Scripture assures us that our sin will find us out—it will come to the surface. And the first place it will surface is in the home. That's why our home is the first place we have to exercise forgiveness.

What foundation do we build forgiveness in our family on?

We build the foundation on the foundation that has already been built. Jesus Christ, God incarnate—creator and sustainer of the universe—stepped down from His throne in heaven—and came to die in order to forgive your sins. And when you come to Him in repentance and trust Him as your Lord and Savior, He brings you to new life in Him. Just as He was raised to life on the third day, He will raise you to walk a new life in Him. And in so doing, Jesus completely and totally forgives all of your sin - past sin, present sin, and future sin. And if that is the way that you were forgiven, then you should be able to forgive as well. If you are God's chosen people, which simply means that Jesus has saved you - then you are holy and pure in Him. And when you are holy and pure in Him, you are beloved by Him. Therefore, because of who Jesus is and what He's done for you, you have no choice but to lead out in family forgiveness. Jesus Christ is the foundation where you build your forgiveness for your family on.

What will forgiveness in our family look like?

Colossians 3:12b - "...clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Therefore, forgiveness looks like compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Forgiveness is something that you have to initiate. Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience are continual attitudes that we must cultivate in our homes. Compassion speaks of having a merciful heart. Try to understand where the other person is coming from. Put yourself in their shoes. Kindness is being unselfish. It's thinking about the others in your family first. Humility is the act of consciously building up others in your family. So often we spend most of our time tearing each other down. Build one another up. Lift them above yourself. Show humility in your family. Gentleness is not weakness. Gentleness is strength under control. It is shown in self-restraint and self-control. You might have the power to manipulate or physically control but gentleness will not exercise that power.

How can we have God's kind of forgiveness?

Can we have the kind of forgiveness in our family that this passage is talking about? Paul gives us **SIX THINGS TO HAVE GOD'S KIND OF FORGIVENESS FOR OUR FAMILY:**

You must submit to the lordship of Christ. Colossians 3:15a - "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace... (NIV)" When a person rules, that means that He is in charge. Is Jesus in complete control of your life? I'm not talking about the rest of your family right now. I'm talking about you. Is Jesus completely in control of your life? Is He ruling every aspect?

You must be thankful to God. Colossians 3:15b - "...And be thankful." We ask God for things all the time, but how often do we simply come to Him to thank Him for who He is and what He's done for us? Be continually thankful to God. You must let the Word of God dwell richly in you. Colossians 3:16a - "Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly...(NIV)" How would you describe your Bible reading? Casual, devotional, rare? Do you know what this means in verse 16? It means that you devour the Bible.

It is your daily bread that sustains and nourishes you. It lives in you in a rich and dynamic and powerful way. So much so, that God's Word is part of you. Does that describe your relationship with God's Word?

You must be actively get involved in a local church and be willing to be held accountable by it. Colossians 3:16b - "...as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom... (NIV)." That's what verse 16 means by the emphasis on teaching and admonishing one another. Willingly staying away from the corporate gathering of the saints of God is not an option. Do you want to have forgiveness in your family? Then you will not forsake the assembling of yourselves together as the habit of some is. Not only will you be actively involved in a local church...

You will actively participate in all forms of corporate worship. Colossians 3:16c - "...through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts (NIV)." When you fail to do that, you are tearing out part of the path that will lead you to having a forgiving family.

You need to live it. Colossians 3:17 - "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him (NIV)." Whatever you do. Wherever you go. You need to live like Christ. Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. If Jesus can't endorse something you're doing in your life, you shouldn't be doing it. It's as simple as that.



1. Do you see a pattern of unforgiveness in your family, share?
 2. What changes do you think you will experience if you will practice today's lesson in your family?
- Pray for each other in your group.**