



DATE	September 27, 2015
SPEAKER	David Smith
TITLE	Forgiving
SERIES	What is wisdom? When is it apparent? How is it gained? Jesus answers these questions when He says wisdom begins with good character. Join us as we look at the character traits Jesus identifies as building blocks for wisdom.

INTRODUCTION

Forgiveness is not just forgiving an incident. It's a character trait, a character expression. It's living your life with the expression of being a forgiving person by not being easily offended, making things right immediately, and working on being at peace.

DISCUSSION

1. David started in Matt. 5:25 – 26 with an example of what can happen when we don't forgive. Can you think of some examples in your own life or the lives of others where horrible events occurred due to the absence of forgiveness and the escalation that results?
2. Are there certain areas where you are easily offended? Pet-peeves that set you off easily?
3. What is the most recent "moment-shattering" wrong you experienced - being cut off in traffic, a snarky comment from a family member, etc.?
4. Read the story about the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32). The father represents one who forgives immediately while the older son harbors his resentment and anger. What truths do you see from the sermon played out in this story? Which person do you more closely identify with and why?
5. Forgiveness puts the burden on you whether you are the offender (Matt. 5:23) or the offended (Matt. 18:15). Why should the offended be required to approach the offender? How does this work in real life when both sides take the initiative?
6. Roman's 12:18 says, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." How far do you need to go to be at peace with others who refuse to reconcile over a wrong?
7. From Matthew 15:18; 1. do it immediately, 2. do it privately, 3. resolve it, 4. take spokespersons, if necessary. What stage of reconciliation do you struggle with most in forgiving and why? What practical steps can you take to move past your sticking point?
8. Do you actively remember your salvation moment? What impact did Jesus' forgiveness of your sins have on you at the time? How can this impact you the next time you struggle with forgiving another?

CLOSING

Forgiveness is used over 190 times in the Bible making it an important concept. To forgive is hard work, yet we do it because God forgave us and it pleases him when we do it.

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:31-32