



DATE	July 16, 2017
SPEAKER	Doug Carroll
TITLE	Impacting Forgiveness
SERIES	Some heroes look better from a distance. Others – including a leader, a prime minister, a martyr, a boy, a bold woman and a man who lost everything – look better up close and personal. But no matter how you look at them, they’ve left epic legacies for us to examine as we create legacies of our own.

Forgiveness is one of the most important values of the Christian life. As believers, we know about it; we talk about it; we even expect it. But do we really understand it? Read: Matthew 6:9–15 and discuss.

1. *Fear and Misconception* hinder our ability to forgive. Which of these do you struggle with?

Fear: The fear of losing control in that relationship. We may have concerns about the behavior being repeated; think it means we are giving up hope for better, or that the “wrong” person is indebted to us.

Misconception: What forgiveness **IS NOT**:

Condoning the behavior

Restoring trust in the person: *Forgiveness does not guarantee change in the other person's behavior.*

Forgetting what happened

Reconciling

Doing someone a favor: Forgiveness is an act of obedience, not a tool of manipulation.

Easy –What does Jesus say to Peter about forgiveness in Matthew 18:21-22?

2. Respond to: "When you refuse to forgive, you are giving the person who walloped you once the privilege of hurting you all over again—in your memory." Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?

3. Jacob had wronged his brother Esau. Joseph was able to witness an act of forgiveness from his Uncle Esau to his father Jacob.

a) Was there ever a time in your life where you had wronged someone, and went to them to ask forgiveness, and they granted it? Can you give an Example?

b) Is that relationship with that person now stronger or weaker since the incident?

c) Have you ever witnessed an act of forgiveness between family members or friends?

4. Read [Luke 5:17-26](#), the healing of the paralytic. What does this passage imply about the relationship between forgiveness and healing?

5. Forgiveness goes against our worldly nature. It may seem undeserved or unwarranted. But the Bible commands us to forgive. Read Ephesians 4:31-32.

6. Do Matthew 5:23-24 and Matthew 18:15-18 contradict one another? Why or why not?

7. Pastor Doug mentioned three steps we can do when forgiveness is not easy, what are those steps?

- a.
- b.
- c.

Does forgiveness flow into our hearts right away?

Refer to Joseph's legacy of forgiveness in Genesis 45: 3-7. Pastor Doug shared the story about the Amish students who were brutally murdered. Here is another true-life story of a missionary, who was murdered, and how the widow of the missionary showed forgiveness and continued his legacy. *Gladys Staines (born c. 1951) is the widow of Australian missionary Graham Staines. Graham Staines was burnt alive (while sleeping in his station wagon) along with their two sons Philip (aged 10) and Timothy (aged 7) by Bajrangdal activist in Odisha, India on 22 January 1999.*

Shortly after the sentencing of the killers, Staines issued a statement saying that she had forgiven the killers and had no bitterness towards them. Rather than return to Australia, Staines "decided to stay in India where she and her husband had served lepers for 15 years", keeping her daughter Esther, with her, stating: "I cannot just leave those people who love and trust us. I have high regard for the people of India and their tolerance."

In 2004, Christianity Today described this woman as "the best-known Christian in India after Mother Teresa." In 2005, she was awarded the Padma Shri, a civilian award from the Government of India. As a result of the contributions earned from receiving that award, Staines transformed the leper house she served at into a full hospital. In November 2015, Staines was awarded the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice and after receiving the award, she stated "I thank God for his help in enabling me to carry out the work in caring for people with leprosy, even after my husband was killed."

Gladys gives us a powerful example of forgiveness and how it bore fruit in her life. Forgiveness isn't a feeling but a choice. It is the act of choosing to release others from a debt. Are there others you need to choose forgiveness for? Are there others you have wronged and need to seek forgiveness from? Now is the time to start your legacy!