

BE A BRINGER

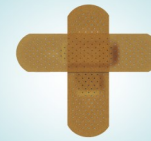
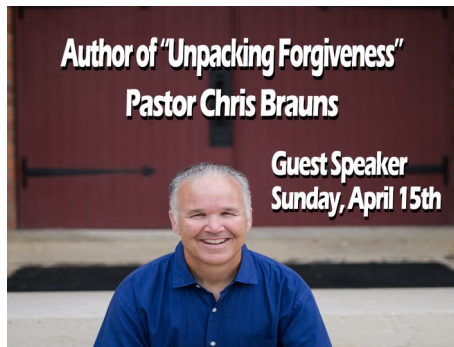
“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....” John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a



What Is Forgiveness?

The goal, of course, is to make sure that a definition of forgiveness squares with biblical teaching. But how, specifically, do we ensure that a definition is biblical? Do we just begin reading in Genesis and try to put together all the teaching about forgiveness? That would be an overwhelming task. Fortunately, it is easier than that. Here is a truth that shows us where to begin our search for a definition of forgiveness:

God expects believers to forgive others in the way that he forgave them.

That is, we should define forgiveness between ourselves and other people the way God defined it in forgiving us.

God’s forgiveness for Christians is the model he expects Christians to live out. We find this principle stated more than once in the Scriptures. Jesus included this point in the Lord’s Prayer. The key word is “as.”

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. (Matthew 6:12b)

Paul stressed this in both Ephesians and Colossians.

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)

... bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. (Colossians 3:13)

In these verses, Paul chose a less common word for “forgive.” This word translated “forgive” is based on the same word as the word normally translated “grace.” Ephesians 4:32 could be translated, “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, being gracious to one another, as God in Christ was gracious to you.”

The gracious offer of forgiveness is unconditional. Christians should always have a disposition of grace toward those who offend them. This is what Jesus modeled on the cross when he prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). Even while he was dying an excruciating death, and before there was any repentance on the part of those who crucified him, he offered grace. We are to follow his example.

God’s forgiveness is gracious. He offers forgiveness freely. This is not because forgiveness is free in terms of cost. It is a very expensive gift that can be offered freely because, motivated by love, God sent his one and only Son to pay the price for it.

Source: Brauns, Chris. Unpacking Forgiveness: Biblical Answers for Complex Questions and Deep Wounds

KEY VERSE

Matthew 18:22

Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven." NKJV

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday: Matthew 18:21-35

Introduction

1. How do you define forgiveness?
2. What are some reasons why the forgiven servant in this parable may have found it difficult to forgive the servant who owed him?

Tuesday: Matthew 18:21-22; Matthew 6:12

Forgiveness is a Lifestyle

3. How would you rate your willingness to forgive others?
4. What are some situations from your life that you have found difficult to forgive?

Wednesday: Matthew 18:23-27; Luke 23:34

Forgiveness is Christlike

5. How is Jesus like the king in this parable? In what ways are we like the servants?
6. How have you experienced the forgiveness of Jesus?

Thursday: Matthew 18:28-34; Ephesians 4:32

Forgiveness is Freedom

7. In what way does forgiving someone give that person freedom?
8. In what way does forgiving someone give you freedom?

Friday: Matthew 18:35; Colossians 3:12-13

Forgiveness is Sincere

9. What does it mean to forgive someone from your heart?
10. How can you tell when forgiveness is sincere and when it is not?
11. How can remembering how God has forgiven you help you to have compassion towards those who offend you?