FORGIVENESS

**DEFINITION**: Colossians 2:13-14=Cancel a debt

Colossians 2:13-14 *When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; He has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.*

**Forgiveness is not an option**: Colossians 3:12-13 *Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.*

In the OT God was angry when His people sinned, so we know sin is big.

Romans 5: God died for us while we were: rebellious, sinners, enemies of God, set against Him.

Scripture: He will remove our sins as far as the east from the west. Psalms 103:12

**MISCONCEPTIONS AND WHY WE DON’T FORGIVE?**

 Believe that if we still remember we haven’t forgiven

 Believe that if we forgive, we are condoning the evil

 We confuse forgiveness with reconciliation

 Think forgiveness is optional

 Forget how much we’ve been forgiven by God through Christ

**We may not ask for forgiveness, because we forget that if we are 1% wrong that is our 100%.**

We forget that God wants to reconcile the world to Himself. He wants us to be reconciled to one another.

He instructs us to make things right before you bring your gift to the altar.

When I want to hold on and not forgive, I’ve lost awe of what God has done for me.

**FORGIVENESS vs RECONCILIATION HAVE WE FORGIVEN?**

Forgiveness is something I do. Others, God, ourselves

Reconciliation takes two.

 Biblical principal Sorrow/Repentance **HAVE WE ACCEPTED FORGIVENESS?**

 If not: Get someone to go with you From others and God

 If not: Get the elders

 If not: Take to body of believers **HAVE WE ASKED GOD**

 If not: Cut off relationship to forgive us for not believing Him?

**DISCUSSION**: If forgiveness is done quickly, will we feel that what we have done is a not a big deal?

 What did it cost God for our forgiveness?

 His instruction is for us to “Forgive others as I have forgiven you.”

 What about, “Father forgive them for they know not what they do.” Did Jesus have to think about it? He was on the cross. No time to think about it.

**HOW DO YOU FORGIVE?**

 First forgive the person before God. Say, “God, I forgive this person and ask that You will take away the hate and bitterness I feel in my heart. Help me feel right toward this person. Help me love with Your love and forgive with Your forgiveness” If person is dead, imagine yourself standing before Jesus and ask for Him to forgive both of you.

 Grieve what was lost

 Cancel debt

 Write a letter that is never delivered. Finish with a paragraph of unconditional forgiveness.

 Do something symbolic to commemorate your forgiving.

**Freedom/healing in forgiveness: People heal faster/die faster in peace, relieving their suffering.**