



Sermon Study Guide
7/29/18

Gods' grace growing in us, among us, and through us, bringing the fullness of Jesus Christ to all of life.

Series Theme
Truths

Blockbuster

Sermon Title
(Josh Glaser)

Revengers

Key Sermon Points

- We all love the movies. Our culture spends billions of dollars each year to be entertained by movies, but often great truths can be found in them as well. All real truth is God's truth, no matter where we find it.
- We do not, by nature, like to be "on the bottom" or in a place of loss. When we do, because someone has wronged us, we tend to want to fight back or in some way take revenge.
- Revenge takes many forms- gossip, criticism, sabotage, dirty tricks, or just rooting against people, etc.
- Forgiveness means:
 - Cancelling the debt (actual or emotional) that someone owes you.
 - Giving up the right to hurt someone back who has hurt you.
- Forgiveness is not:
 - Forgetting
 - Saying your wound/experience doesn't matter
 - Going back to the way things were
 - A feeling or emotion
- Corrie Ten Boom was able to forgive her Nazi torturers because she knew God's forgiveness.
- We must ask ourselves; who do we trust more to heal our wounds- Jesus or the people and events in our past?
- Steps to forgiveness:
 - Focus on the cross of Jesus
 - Forgiveness, by definition, isn't "fair."
 - We are all the same at the cross.
 - Acknowledge the wrong and who did it.
 - Actively and decisively cancel the debt of the one who has wronged you.
 - Seek forgiveness where you have wronged others.
- Forgiveness is hard work. It was for Jesus, but He will never leave us or forsake us.

Scripture: Matthew 6:9-15, 18:21-22, Hebrews 4:16

Personal Application

1. Are there any people or events in your past that you need to forgive? Are there any people whom you need to ask for forgiveness? Make a plan to do this and act upon it this week!

2. Memorize Matthew 6:14-15 this week. Print it, post it in a prominent place and review it several times each day...

14"For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15"But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

Discussion Questions: (conversations)

1. Someone has said "Refusing to forgive someone is like burning down your own house to get rid of a rat." As you think on this analogy and others, what are the cleansing and practical reasons and implications for forgiveness?

2. As you meditate on the teaching (Matt. 6:12-15) and example of Jesus, how is forgiveness essential for the Christian life and closeness with God?

3. Whom might you need to forgive or ask forgiveness of?

4. What might it look like or require for Grace Fellowship Church to embrace the concept of forgiveness deeply?

Life Groups

Use the discussion questions above (and others as you are led) as you consider forgiveness as a way of life. Is there a group application for this?

Children & Families

Talk with your children about some family instances of forgiveness. Ask forgiveness for any current wrongs. Start a family practice of verbally expressing forgiveness for one another.

Other Resources

The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World: by Desmond Tutu (Author), Mpho Tutu (Author)

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize winner, Chair of The Elders, and Chair of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, along with his daughter, the Reverend Mpho Tutu, offer a manual on the art of forgiveness—helping us to realize that we are all capable of healing and transformation.

If you asked anyone what they thought was going to happen to South Africa after apartheid, almost universally it was predicted that the country would be devastated by a comprehensive bloodbath. Yet, instead of revenge and retribution, this new nation chose to tread the difficult path of confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

After much reflection on the process of forgiveness, Tutu has seen that there are four important steps to healing: Admitting the wrong and acknowledging the harm; Telling one's story and witnessing the anguish; Asking for forgiveness and granting forgiveness; and renewing or releasing the relationship. Forgiveness is hard work. Sometimes it even feels like an impossible task. But it is only through walking this fourfold path that Tutu says we can free ourselves of the endless and unyielding cycle of pain and retribution. *The Book of Forgiving* is both a touchstone and a tool, offering Tutu's wise advice and showing the way to experience forgiveness. Ultimately, forgiving is the only means we have to heal ourselves and our aching world.

Choosing Forgiveness: Your Journey to Freedom: by Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Scripture says that offenses will happen. People will let us down and we will let others down, as well. Forgiveness is left up to us to pray about and then practice. Far from minimizing the hurt of the offense, readers are called to understand that offering forgiveness and letting go of bitterness is the only way to walk in faithfulness. Drawing on biblical teaching of our call to forgive, Nancy shows the reader that forgiveness is a choice- and the only pathway to true freedom.