

Week 11 (11/1) – Imitating the Grace of Forgiveness

Grace is any action which expresses the love, compassion, kindness, favor, and faithfulness of God
God gives us grace in many different forms

- Redemption / forgiveness (Rom 3:21f; Eph 2:1-8)
- Gifts / skills / abilities....a place in the body of Christ (Rom 12:6f; 1 Pet 4:10)
- Answers to Prayer (1 Peter 3:7)
- Resources for giving (2 Cor 8:1-7; 9:6-15)
- Expressed in our Talk (Col 4:6)
- Expressed in our non-possessing (Lk 6:32-34)
- Something to grow in (2 Pet 3:18)
- Spurs holiness, not indulgence (Rom 6:1-15, Gal 5:13f; Jude 4)

Forgiveness & Grace

- 1 Cor 13 – record of wrongs?
- 2 Cor 5 – gospel message is described as God not counting men’s sins against them
- Col 3:13 – forgive any grievances you have against one another
- Mark 11:25
- Luke 6:37-42

Common barriers to forgiving others

- Justifiable resentment – the person truly hurt you, offended you, wronged you...you have a reason to be upset with them
- Forgetting instead of forgiving (see Heb 8:12; 1 John 2:9)
- Avoiding the person instead
- Comparisons – what you did was much worse than...
- Demanding repentance
- Don’t want to excuse or condone sin (Lk 15:11f; Rom 5:8)
- Have not received the forgiveness of others

Discussion

- What is the connection between grace and forgiveness?
- What fears do we express / use to justify withholding our forgiveness of others?
- What does it cost us to forgive others....that don’t deserve it?
- How does receiving grace from God effect our forgiveness of others?
- Why do we forgive, before and without repentance?

What does imitating grace look like in these situations?

- Someone offends you
- Someone says mean, untrue things about you...spreading rumors about your character
- Someone disagrees with you
- Someone does not live up to your expectations, your hopes, who you thought they were
- You give money or loan something to someone, who doesn't pay it back
- You have a business deal and the other person does not keep their word
- You have grounds for a lawsuit

Which is easier

- To claim God's grace or to forgive others? (Matt 9:1-7)