

Gospel Vignettes for Kingdom People on the Way, Part 3 (Matthew 18:15–20)
Grace Covenant Church, Virginia Beach, VA. 3/21/21, Morning Worship

Introduction:

- A. We are primarily citizens of another kingdom, the Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdom of God.
- B. This Kingdom is seen by the watching world in two distinctive ways:
 - 1. When the church corporately meets for worship (institutional church, cf. 1 Cor 14:24, 25)
 - 2. In the lives of individual Christians (organic church, cf. Matt 5:13)
 - a. Church as re-salination plant

C. **Main Idea: THE UNIQUE WAY IN WHICH CHRISTIANS FORGIVE IS A SAVORY TASTE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

*Kingdom people seek to restore their straying brethren
through a forgiveness modelled by the gospel*

- I. The Goal of Forgiveness
 - A. The goal of every one of the three steps is to “*bring your brother/sister to their senses, not to make them pay!*”
 - B. A Kingdom Ethic: Christ and his body want to help you find better desires rather than settling for weaker desires.
- II. The Terms of Forgiveness (cf. Luke 17:3–5)
As Christians, we are not obligated to forgive someone unless, and until they have asked for forgiveness
 - A. The very protocol that Jesus gives us in Matt 18 assumes the necessity of the transgressor acknowledging their sin, confessing their sin and asking for forgiveness *before* forgiveness is granted by the one offended
 - B. The Gospel is the Model for our Granting of Forgiveness: Forgive AS the Lord forgave you (Col 3:13)
- III. The Careful Nuance of Forgiveness: Distinguish between a *disposition* of forgiveness and a *transaction* of forgiveness
 - A. A *disposition of forgiveness* is one in which you stand ready to forgive them when they come and ask for it. Until then, you do not grow bitter and angry for that is sin. You promise to strive to maintain a loving and merciful attitude toward someone who has offended you (cf. Acts 7:60; Luke 23:34)
 - B. *Transaction of forgiveness* is when someone acknowledges their sin, confesses it, repents, and asks forgiveness (Acts 2:36–41).
- IV. Do Not Confuse Forgiveness with Other Things
 - A. *Forgiveness is not the same as trust* (2 Sam 12:11–14)
 - B. *Forgiveness is not a feeling*; it is an act of the will. Forgiveness is something that is granted.

- V. Forgiveness is a Promise
- A. I will not dwell on this incident (Jer. 31:34; Psalm 103:12; Psalm 130:3-4)
 - B. I will not bring this incident up and use it against you (1 Cor 13:5, NIV)
 - C. I will not talk to others about this incident (Eph 4:32)
 - D. I will not allow this incident to stand between us or hinder our personal relationship

The best diagnostic question you can ask to make sure your forgiveness is biblical is: **“Does the forgiveness I’m offering look like the forgiveness I received?”**

Gospel Vignettes for Kingdom People on the Way, Part 4 (Matthew 18:21–35)

Grace Covenant Church, Virginia Beach, VA. 3/21/21. Vesper

Main Idea: The Unique Way in which the Request for Forgiveness is Offered: *Kingdom people sense the greatness of their sin, and forgive as they have been forgiven*

- I. Peter's Question and our Lord's answer
- II. Gospel principle=*forgive as you've been forgiven*
 - A. Addressing the double-standard in our forgiveness
 - B. *What does it say when we readily and gratefully accept the forgiveness that God shows us toward our transgressions against him and yet are often unwilling to forgive the transgressions of others toward us?*
- III. Apologizing Well
 - A. The Seven A's of Confession
 1. **Address Everyone Involved** (i.e., everyone who has been directly affected by your wrongdoing)
 2. **Avoid if, but, and maybe**
 3. **Admit Specifically**
 4. **Acknowledge the hurt**
 5. **Accept the consequences**
 6. **Alter your behavior**
 7. **Ask for forgiveness and allow time to build back trust**
 - B. A warning against formulas and perfunctory forgiveness:
- IV. The Gospel motivated Kingdom Ethic: Be who you are!

Questions for Application and Discussion:

1. Pastor Josh described the church as a "re-salination plant" (cf. Matt. 5:13) How is the church a re-salination plant?"
2. What is the goal of forgiveness?
3. How would we contrast the way in which Christians and most unbelievers think about forgiveness?
4. Are Christians obligated to forgive an offender if the offender is not recognizing their sin or asking for forgiveness? Why or why not?
5. How is the message of the gospel the model for how we forgive others?
6. What is the difference between a *disposition* of forgiveness and a *transaction* of forgiveness?
7. Is forgiveness the same as trust? Why is this distinction important?

8. What are the four promises of forgiveness?
9. What does it say when we readily and gratefully accept the forgiveness that God shows us toward our transgressions against Him and yet are often unwilling to forgive the transgressions of others toward us?
10. When asking forgiveness, why is it important to address everyone involved?