

## **SERMON NOTES    JANUARY 25, 2009**

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### **Forgiving One Another**

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Introduction: "... he was abandoned, sold, despised and imprisoned...falsely"

Text: Genesis 50:15-21 & Ephesians 4:32

Main Idea: Forgiveness is both a command to obey and a character trait to be revealed in those who know the forgiveness of Jesus in their lives. In order to practice this discipline and fulfill our destiny as Christ-followers, we need to:

- I. Know what forgiveness is and isn't - the Definition of a tough idea
  - A. What forgiveness is not
    1. Forgiveness is not forgetting – the false path of moral amnesia
    2. Forgiveness is not avoidance – the false hope of an "ignoring" outlook
    3. Forgiveness is not excusing – the curse of the "whatever" culture
  - B. What forgiveness is
    1. The Canceling of a Debt – the depletion of the account
    2. The Coming back to the Cross – the re-filling of the account
- II. Practice what seems impossible - the Discipline of a hard exercise
  - A. Forgiveness as "the first step" – the unilateral decision
  - B. Reconciliation as "the next step" – the bilateral agreement
  - C. Restoration as the "final step" – the long-term result
  - D. Forgiveness matters – seven reasons to forgive
    1. Unforgiveness will hurt no one more than myself
    2. Unforgiveness will often hurt others
    3. Unforgiveness may deny healing to another
    4. Unforgiveness affects my relationship with God
    5. Unforgiveness is readily exploited by the Evil One
    6. Forgiveness demonstrates Christ's presence
    7. It shows our own experience of God's forgiveness
- III. Become people of grace in a world of hate - the Destiny of a great reward
  - A. Forgiving one another orients us toward the future
  - B. Forgiving one another encourages us to be holy

Conclusion: What difference will this command have for us...today...forever?