

STRAIGHT TALK

biblical communication

**Forgive
One
Another!**



Week 7
11/19/23



WELCOME

Welcome to the Fall 2023 Life Group Series! For the final week, we will be learning about Biblical communication principles.

Why are we learning how to communicate? Haven't we been communicating for as long as we can remember? Yes! But things have changed. Technology has had a huge impact on how we communicate with one another. Twenty years ago, we had an easier time getting along with friends, family, and coworkers because most of our communication was verbal. We talked in person or called people on the phone.

When we disagreed with someone in conversation before smartphones, we tried to do it gently. Saying something nasty to someone in person might get you punched in the face. Say it on Facebook, or over a text, and you'll just get unfriended or blocked. COVID, the culture war, and smartphones have drastically altered how we communicate - even with our own family and loved ones. A lot has changed, but the principles of Biblical communication have not changed. They are...

1. Listen before speaking.
2. Be open to correction.
3. Tell the truth.
4. Hold one another accountable.
5. Handle conflict in a way that leads to peace.
6. Use speech that edifies.
7. Forgive one another.

We hope you enjoy this time COMMUNICATING with your Life Group as we teach one another how to honor God and one another in our speech.



THINGS TO DO BEFORE LIFE GROUP

- If you're bringing a new person to the study, we recommend getting them study materials ahead of time so they can feel prepared.
- Pray that the LORD will open your eyes and heart to receive the lessons he has to teach you in the study.
- Read the scripture focus for the study.
- Go through the questions and think about how you might answer them. We've provided space in the study for you to write down your answers if you'd like.





INTRO

Forgiveness is hard, but unforgiveness is harder. The cross of Jesus Christ was undoubtedly hard. Yet, it was the means God used to absorb our transgressions against him. On the cross, Jesus paid the debt we owe for transgressing, not one or two of his good, just laws, but ALL OF THEM.

Why would Jesus do such a thing? The writer of Hebrews says it was for the joy that was set before him (Hebrews 12:2). It was the joy of reconciling with people who hate him so that he might be glorified for who he is. Who is God? God is a God who forgives and reconciles. We are to be holy as God is holy. We are to reflect his grace to the world. So, who is a Christian? A Christian is a person who forgives just as God has forgiven us, so that the world might see him through us.

HISTORICAL SNAPSHOT



As we discussed last week, the Apostle Paul founded the church in Ephesus during his third missionary journey (Acts 19). Paul presented the church in Ephesus with the only way to have shalom (peace) with God. The church had to be forgiven of their sins against their creator. Paul's letter affirms their identity as men and women who are at peace with God, reconciled to him, so that they might have peace that lasts forever.

God established that peace between himself and the church. Paul encourages the Ephesian church to share that peace with others by forgiving one another, mending what is broken, and reconciling with one another as God has reconciled himself to the church.

COMMUNICATION TIPS



Why should we forgive others?

1. Christ commands it. (Matthew 18:21-35)
2. God has forgiven us even though our offense against him is much greater than anything anyone could do to us. (Ephesians 4:32)
3. Vengeance is the Lord's. (Romans 12:19-21) Praying for our enemies sets us free from the bondage of anger toward our enemies.

LET'S

TALK

ABOUT IT

Notes

What We Believe

1. What did Paul tell the Ephesian church to put away (Ephesians 4:31)?
2. How did Paul tell the Ephesian church to interact with one another?
3. Who is the church that they should be imitators of God? How should the church imitate God?

God Speaks to Us

1. Describe a time when you forgave someone. What effect did it have on you? What effect did it have on the person you forgave?
2. Do you find it difficult to ask for forgiveness? What prevents us from asking for forgiveness?

God Speaks to Our Family

1. Children imitate their parents. Should parents ever ask their children for forgiveness? Why or why not?
2. Hurts inflicted by family members cut deeply. How would you counsel a Christian who's been hurt by his/her family, and the family member refuses to acknowledge the hurt they've inflicted and ask forgiveness? Do we have to forgive everybody no matter what - even if they don't ask for forgiveness?

LET'S

TALK

ABOUT IT

Notes

God Speaks in Our Worship

1. During worship, we are called to examine our lives in relation to God's law, we confess our sins, and then hear the assurance of God's pardon for our sins. Why is this process of confession essential in our relationship with God?
2. Given that we hear in worship that we fall infinitely short of God's holy law, that he listens to our confession, and assures us of his forgiveness, how should we approach those in the church who have hurt us? Can we accept God's forgiveness while refusing to forgive others?

The Gospel Call

1. What role does God's law have to play in our presentation of the gospel?
2. How would you respond to someone who tells you that they're a good person and so they're not worried about going to hell?



Lined area for taking notes, resembling a sheet of paper with a perforated top edge.