



Lesson #6: Forgiveness (Philemon)

The book of Philemon is a short but powerful book dedicated to the crucial topic of forgiveness. The book is a letter penned by the Apostle Paul and written to his friend Philemon. Paul understands that there are certain driving forces that cause people to act in certain ways. With this in mind, Paul uses verse 19-25 to uncover the driving forces behind true _____ . What really motivates us to forgive?

As we open to Philemon we understand that there are very real motives that lie behind the heart of all true forgiveness. Because you must forgive, you must understand these driving forces. Paul identifies three motivations for forgiveness that will cause Philemon to exercise forgiveness towards _____. These are the same motivations that must move you to forgive today.

YOUR FORGIVENESS MUST BE DRIVEN BY _____ (Phil. 19)

“_____ and _____” is the standard greeting in all _____ of Paul’s NT letters. It appears in verse 3 of this book. Paul deals heavily with the way that salvation affects the way we look at other _____. There are at least two perspectives at play here.

A. Recognize the grace at work in the one you are _____ (v. 10-13)

When Onesimus returns to Philemon he was a changed person

- He had been _____ (v. 10)
- He is now _____ (v. 11)
- He has become emotionally attached to _____ (v. 12)
- He was now serving Paul in the _____ (v. 13)

B. Recognize the grace at work in your own _____ (v. 19)

If you recognize _____ that you have received grace then you will be able to extend the _____ grace (forgiveness) that is also necessary. In the span of two verses, Philemon is turned from creditor to debtor, and is loaded with so much debt that he is now under limitless obligation to forgive!

YOUR FORGIVENESS MUST BE DRIVEN BY A DESIRE FOR _____ (Phil. 20)

In the midst of an age that knows little to nothing of true unity it can be hard to understand Paul’s motivation here. The point Paul is making is that _____ is what drives true unity!

A. Unity brings _____ benefit

When you’re not in the right with someone, it’s a real irritation – It’s supposed to be that way! Though we may have differences, and opposing ideas, the body of Christ is meant to be composed of individuals who are unified, not divided.

B. Unity brings massive _____

Oh, the _____ of the Christian who strives to live in unity by exercise the grace of forgiveness! Conversely, oh the _____ nature of the Christian who chooses to hold on to things and not offer forgiveness. Someone who knows nothing of true joy is usually someone who does not recognize that forgiveness is driven by a desire for unity.

YOUR FORGIVENESS MUST BE DRIVEN BY _____ (Phil. 21-22)

The Christian life is full of _____. We are exhorted to love one another, show grace and preference, speak edifying words, honor the Lord, etc. Should it be any surprise then, that as we consider these two verses we come away realizing that forgiveness is driven by the duty in our Christian lives?

A. Your obedience should inspire _____ (v. 21)

Paul’s confidence was that Philemon “got” Christianity, and that based off of that understanding, he knew that he would forgive Onesimus. Is your Christian character such that people know and understand that you are always ready and willing to forgive? What’s the “_____” in your life?

B. Your obedience should be _____ (v. 21)

Paul says that is confidence Philemon will do, “*even _____ than I say.*” We are not exactly sure what it means, but we do know that Paul expects there will be an effort to go beyond what is normally asked.

C. Your obedience should be _____ (v. 22)

True forgiveness does not have a time limit. When you forgive you do so permanently.