

St John's Baptist Church
38-40 Everett Street, Woburn, MA
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“STRUGGLING TO FORGIVE”

Facilitator: Deaconess Esther Pearson

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Introduction

How do you forgive someone that has done you great harm? This is a question that most women struggle with at some point during their lifetime. It is a question that until answered can cause great pain, suffering, and anger.

The Holy Bible answers this question best. It leads us to the source for all forgiveness. The Holy Bible states in Ephesians 4:32, “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” NIV

The Holy Bible indicates that ‘the act of forgiving is more for you than for the other person that has harmed you’. It also indicates that ‘you can’t forgive in your own power’. And lastly, ‘let God be the judge’.

Forgiveness is both a struggle of sin, and of relationships with others, as well as, yourself. Not forgiving someone that has harmed you holds you in bondage. Until the bonds are released you will live in the past. You will not be free to live a life in its fullest sense. Forgiveness moves you to reconciliation and closure with who or what has harmed you.

Background

Unforgiveness leads to anger, bitter, rage, maliciousness, and the list goes on. All of these being or leading to sin.

Anger prevents harmony in your home, blessings on your job, growth in your church, God’s outreach in your community, and your maturity in Christ. In other words, it prevents serving Christ in your home, job, church, community and in every part of your life.

Colossians 3:8 states what we must put-off:

But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. NIV

Colossians 3:12-14 states what we must put-on:

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. NIV

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What is forgiveness?
2. Can we forgive in our own power?
3. Why is it so important to forgive one another?