

FORGIVENESS

∴ the key to relationship ∴∴

Part 1: THE KEY TO RECONCILIATION

Part 2: The Key To Community

Part 3: The Key To Freedom

Part 4: The Key To Life

INTRODUCTION – The Choice That Changes

THE PROBLEM – THREE REALITIES...

- 1) We were designed for _____ relationship, naked and unashamed. (**Genesis 1:26-27; 2:18; 1 John 4:12, 16**)
- 2) We exchanged perfection for autonomy and now are born into _____, where people hurt people. (**Genesis 3; Romans 3:23; James 3:2; etc.**)
- 3) Hence, we are _____ drawn toward and most hurt by the same thing – relationship.

OUR RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM – 4 OPTIONS...

- 1) R _____ – Thinking ourselves to death.
- 2) R _____ – I don't get mad, I get even.
- 3) R _____ – I'm fine, really. Just fine.
- 4) F _____ – The key to relationship.

Defining Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the _____ to set aside the debt of someone's wrongdoing against you; the cancellation of a _____ debt. (**Matthew 18:21-35**)

Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13

Reconciliation Through Radical Forgiveness

- *The Prodigal Son...*

Luke 15:1-2, 11-32

TAKE OUT: The Father's focus is not your sin, but _____.

- *The Older Brother...*

TAKE OUT: Lack of forgiveness keeps us _____ of the experience of the Kingdom.

- *The Gracious Father...*

TAKE OUT: Although we may be the prodigal son or the older brother, we are called to take on the role of the _____. (**Luke 6:36**)

CONCLUSION – Running The Race With Both Legs

Philippians 3:13-14; Hebrews 12:1

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

WARMING UP...

1. After briefly reviewing this week's message, share one thing that most challenged you.
2. Explore and discuss this quote from Jewish philosopher Hannah Arendt: *The only remedy for the inevitability of our history is forgiveness.*

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

3. Review the parable of the Gracious Father in **Luke 15:11-32**. a) Are you most like the prodigal son or the older brother? In what ways? b) Knowing that we are called to become more like the Father, what about that process intimidates you most?
4. Let's study the recurring biblical theme of "reconciliation" as the fundamental need of humanity. Read **Romans 5:10-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Ephesians 2:12-19; Colossians 1:19-23**. For each passage, a) identify who is in need of reconciliation with whom, b) identify why alienation has/had occurred, c) identify who or what has the power to accomplish reconciliation, and d) consider at least one thing we could do to work *with* God (and not *against* him) to bring this process about.

SO WHAT?...

5. What about your own life? a) In what relationship in your life do you most need to experience the healing of reconciliation? b) What is one thing you could do this week to move toward the relational healing you need? c) Pray for each other regarding this.

LOOKING AHEAD...

5. Read and reflect on **Matthew 5:23-24; 6:14-15; 18:21-22; Mark 11:25; Luke 17:3-4**.

Bruxy Cavey @ THE MEETING HOUSE – Sunday, September 28 / October 5, 2003