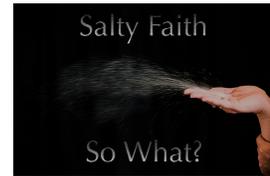




5-6-18 Sermon Discussion Guide “Salty Faith: Forgiveness”



Context

This week we begin a new sermon series entitled “Salty Faith.” It asks the question, “What difference does follow Jesus make in our lives?” This is a big question with big implications. It can make all the difference in the world. In the coming weeks, we’ll explore many facets of this question and take a more specific look at how this question impacts us. This week we discussion forgiveness. To embrace radical forgiveness is a distinctive calling of Christ. What does that mean for how we live today?

Checking In

Since the last time your group has met, how have each of you experienced God at work? What have you celebrated? What have you mourned?

Introduction

If you had to define forgiveness, what would you say? More than simply telling someone, “I forgive you,” what does forgiving another actually mean for how one lives their life?

Discussing the Text – Matthew 18:21-35

1. The common Jewish belief was that one was required to forgive another 3 times. So Peter’s guess of seven times was already a very generous number. What do you think was motivating Peter to ask Jesus this question in the first place?
2. There is some debate whether Jesus’ response to Peter in verse 22 is “seventy-seven” or “seventy times seven.” What difference does it make if it’s one number verses the other?
3. How does the first servant respond to the forgiveness he’s received from his master in v. 28?
4. What happens to the first servant at the end of Jesus’ parable in verses 32-34?
5. How does this passage parallel with Matthew 6:12-15?

So what?

1. According to Jesus’ teaching, do you believe forgiveness is optional for Christians? Why or not?
2. If God’s forgiveness of us conditional upon our forgiveness of others, what does this mean about God’s free grace that he gives us? Do we have to work for it?
3. Do we have to forget people’s wrongs in order to forgive them? Do we have to trust them continually? Must we stay in relationship with those who’ve hurt us?
4. What might make it easier for you to forgive those who’ve hurt you? What makes it difficult to forgive others?
5. How does this passage give you hope?
6. How does this passage challenge you?
7. How can you apply this passage to your life this week?

Prayer

Have the group share any prayer requests or prayers of thanksgiving they may have. Then invite the group to ask God for forgiveness this week, and to ask God for the strength to forgive others.