

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES #3- DISCIPLINAS ESPIRITUALES #3 – FORGIVENESS - PERDON

BY THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES WE DRAW NEAR TO JESUS AND BECOME MORE LIKE HIM. JESUS TEACHES US TO FORGIVE OTHERS.

Icebreaker: How does your favorite pet respond when he is scolded or disciplined? Does the scolding change his future behavior? Sometimes when we are upset with people we give them the “silent treatment.” Does that work with pets?

Jesus sometimes had to confront his friends for bad behavior. What kind of “discipline” did Jesus favor when dealing with friends?

Why did Jesus come into the world? ¿Por qué Jesús vino al mundo?” What is your two or three word answer to this question?

Porque el Hijo del hombre vino a buscar y a salvar lo que se había perdido. (Lucas 19:10 (NVI))

The Bible teaches that Jesus came into the world “to seek and save the lost.”

The mission of Jesus is a mission of forgiveness. **La misión de Jesús es una misión de perdón.**

Luke 19 teaches that God’s love is a **seeking, saving and forgiving** love. How is “**seeking**” (**buscando**) the sinner (**picador**) a necessary part of true forgiveness?

How is “**saving**” (**ahorro**) **the lost** (**perdido**) related to forgiveness? Can we effectively seek and save the lost without an attitude of forgiveness?

We all know **John 3:16**. *“Porque tanto amó Dios al mundo que dio a su Hijo unigénito, para que todo el que cree en él no se pierda, sino que tenga vida eterna.”*

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

God’s forgiving love is a **giving** (**dando**) and **sacrificial** (**sacrificatorio**) **love** (**amor**).

What price did Jesus pay to seek and save you by forgiving your sins?

What is the personal price (sacrifice) you must pay to seek out and give forgiveness to someone who has hurt you? What is the personal cost of forgiveness of others?

DIGGING IN: What does it REALLY mean to forgive someone?

Is forgiveness a spoken word?

Is it necessary to speak words of forgiveness to someone who sinned against you? Why so?

Is it enough to just speak the words or must the words be followed by actions? Why so?

Is there value in asking God to help you forgive? Is there value in *telling God* that you have forgiven someone?

Is forgiveness a feeling or emotion? Can you truly forgive someone and not feel “good” about the forgiveness?

Does God promise us peace with the forgiven person when we forgive?

What is the purpose of forgiveness? What are we hoping to achieve when we forgive someone?

We have said that forgiveness is a spiritual discipline. A discipline is a *learned* behavior. That is the reason we study and discuss forgiveness in our Home Groups. We hear from our Christian amigos how they forgave someone who hurt them badly, and we learn how to do what they did.

Roundtable this: Ask some of your members to give personal examples where they forgave someone hard to forgive. Don't disclose names or confidences, but discuss what made it hard? How were you able to forgive anyway? How did forgiveness affect the other person? How did forgiveness affect you?

Peter came to Jesus and asked, “*Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?*” Jesus answered, “*I tell you, not seven times, but seventy times seven.*” (Matthew 18:21-22).

Pedro se acercó a Jesús y le preguntó: —Señor, ¿cuántas veces tengo que perdonar a mi hermano que peca contra mí? ¿Hasta siete veces? —No te digo que hasta siete veces, sino hasta setenta y siete veces—le contestó Jesús—.

Forgiveness is hard work. Forgiveness is a work that is never finished in this life. Forgiveness is rarely a “one and done” activity. Jesus teaches us that we must forgive over and over again.

If we keep score of the sins committed against us are we truly forgiving? If we bring up past sins when we are in a heated discussion, have we truly forgiven?

The spiritual discipline of forgiveness is also a *spiritual* activity, not a natural one. What does your flesh tell you when you have been slandered or cheated or hurt in some way? How does the Spirit of God speak to you at that time?

For your inspiration to forgive others look to the cross of Jesus. The prayer of Jesus from the cross was: “*Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing.*”

“Padre —dijo Jesús—, perdónalos, porque no saben lo que hacen.” (Lucas 23:34).

Christian forgiveness requires the help of the Holy Spirit. Like our Lord Jesus Christ, we ask for God's help in prayer.

Pray that God will show you someone that you need to forgive, and why you need to forgive them. Pray that God will show you how to forgive and send you the strength to give the gift that keeps on giving – the loving gift of forgiveness.