

“Forgive IN Christ”

Use this guide as a tool to help you prepare to experience spiritual transformation in a practical way. It is a flexible guide that will help you discover, own, and apply the truths of God’s Word.

Message Summary

The current series titled **IN Christ** deals with the intimate letter from the imprisoned Apostle Paul to a church leader in Colossae named Philemon. Philemon was an influential man in the city who also owned slaves. One of his slaves named Onesimus fled Colossae and tried to lose himself in the city of Rome, however, he met Paul and was born again **IN Christ**. Therefore, Paul knew he needed to send Onesimus back to Philemon to restore their relationship **IN Christ**. This restoration would reunite them as brothers rather than master and slave. Further it would be a demonstration of the forgiving power found among people who are **IN Christ**.

During the first sermon in this series we discovered what it means to be a Family **IN Christ**. As a family we serve the same Master, live in the same body, work for the same purpose, fight the same enemy, and extend the same grace. Last week we learned what it means to be a Fellowship **IN Christ**. As a fellowship we partner together for the sake of the Gospel in order to multiply disciples of Jesus. We share a sacrificial love for one another the way we love Jesus. We share an effective life transforming Gospel-centered ministry. Finally, we share in building up the body by imitating Jesus.

This week we learned what it means to Forgive **IN Christ**. The point of Paul’s letter was to ask Philemon to forgive Onesimus for his rebellion against his master. This was a tender issue, however, Paul was confident that Philemon would do as he asked. We can learn much from this letter regarding forgiveness. During this message we learned that when we do forgive others **IN Christ**, we actually are displaying the Gospel that has changed us. On the other hand, our failure to forgive others **IN Christ** will work against our efforts to make disciples and sends a confusing message about what we believe about our own salvation.

As you prepare to meet with your Missional Community this week examine the five reasons to forgive that were discussed during the sermon. In what ways are you living out these principles? How is God working in your heart through these reasons? As you reflect on your own salvation and forgiveness through Christ, what changes is God working in your heart? Remember, we together are **IN Christ** and should live so that Christ will be magnified in our lives in not only word but also deed. There is no greater place this is accomplished than when we Forgive **IN Christ**!

Message Outline

We live out the Gospel when we forgive **IN Christ.**

5 Reasons to forgive others...

1. Forgiveness is an act of love (8-11).
2. Forgiveness is necessary for true gospel ministry to take place (12-14).
3. Forgiveness displays unity in Christ (15-16).
4. Forgiveness is a humble reminder of your own canceled sin (17-19).
5. Forgiveness always produces fruit (20).

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Group Discussion

Use the following questions to help make application of God’s Word to your Head (What God wants me to know), to your Heart (What God wants me to desire/value), and to your Hands (What God wants me to do).

In regard to Philemon 8-20:

1. What does this passage say about God’s character?
2. What is God doing here? How does this passage fit in the overall narrative of the Bible?
3. What is God saying about me?
4. Where am I not living by faith? How do I return to faith?
5. How should I practice this in everyday life?

Weekly Prayer Focus

• **Church:**

- Pray that God would be glorified in the upcoming Beach Baptism on September 18, 2015.
- Pray that God would give us new believers and covenant members.
- Pray that all who have believed the Gospel will obey Jesus in believer’s baptism.
- Pray for new relationships that will lead to Gospel conversations.
- Pray for the elders as they lead us to accomplish the mission.
- Pray for the Missional Communities to establish their goals and objects and begin to live them out.

• **Local:**

- Pray for the Friday Night Beach Bonfire Outreach and the developing friendships. Pray these will lead toward Gospel conversations.
- Pray that God would burden us with the lostness in our cities, neighborhoods, and at work.
- Pray that God will identify 5 people you can begin to invest in and engage with the Gospel.

• **Global:**

- Pray that God would give you a heart for the nations.
- Pray for the new believer in SEA and for those who have heard the Gospel.
- Pray for A&M in SEA and their team as they seek to lead a church planting movement among the unreached.
- Pray for Good Shepherd Ministries and Bill & Sandy Younger.
- Pray for Servants Hearts Ministries and Bob & Georgette Kornegay.
- Pastor Abraham and his church in Guatemala.