

Prerequisite for Fruit Bearing (Forgiveness)

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I. Introduction.

A. Unresolved guilt is the number one cause of suicide.

B. The cure for guilt is forgiveness.

II. God's forgiveness.

A. The basis of God's forgiveness: Jesus came to be crucified in order to bear the weight of our sins. (Isaiah 53:3-12)

B. The characteristics of God's forgiveness.

1. Cleansing. (Isaiah 1:18; 1 John 1:9)

2. Immediate. (2 Samuel 12:13; Psalm 32:5; 1 John 1:9)

3. Complete. (Psalm 103:3; Colossians 2:13; 1 John 1:9; Isaiah 55:7)

4. It is not based on what we deserve. (Micah 7:18-19; Psalm 103:3-4, 8-10)

5. When God forgives, sins are forgotten. Our sins are completely removed. (Hebrews 10:17; Jeremiah 31:34; Hebrews 8:12; Isaiah 43:25; 1 John 2:1; Psalm 103:12; Micah 7:19; Isaiah 44:22; 1 John 1:9)

D. Prerequisites of forgiveness.

1. Confession, which is agreeing with God. Be specific. (Psalm 32:3-5; 1 John 1:9)

2. Repentance, which is a change of mind that issues in regret and a change of conduct. (Isaiah 55:7; Matthew 3:2)

3. Forgiving others. There is power in a forgiving spirit. (Mark 11:25)

III. Our forgiving one another.

A. Keep short accounts. (Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15)

1. Make a list of those whom you have hurt.

2. Make things right with those people.

B. Do not relieve your own soul at the expense of another.

C. The limit of our forgiveness should be how much we want to be forgiven. (Matthew 18:21-22)

D. Steps.

1. Empathetic repenting.

2. Unilateral forgiveness.

IV. Our forgiving ourselves.

A. Forgiving ourselves is one of the most difficult thing.

B. We have to start by knowing God's forgiveness. Jesus is the answer to guild.

C. Our sin is not too big for God to forgive. (Jeremiah 32:17, 27; Ephesians 1:7)

D. Our besetting sins can be forgiven too. (Psalm 86:5)

E. Condemnation comes from Satan and not from God. (John 8:11; Romans 8:1; Colossians 2:15; Romans 8:33-34; Isaiah 43:18-19; Colossians 1:22)

Application questions:

1. What does it require to be forgiven by God?

2. How can we overcome our struggles with forgiving people?

3. How would you characterize God's forgiveness to someone who has never experienced it?
