

How Can I Forgive Myself? 04-20-14 Easter Sunday Week 2: Forgiveness, the Real F Word

In Ezekiel 33:16 God says, “None of their past sins will be brought up again.” Wow!! Who needs to know that today?

- That’s how God forgives. Yet we tend to carry baggage around and never forgive ourselves.
- Forgiveness only becomes real in my life when we learn how to forgive ourselves.

So the question is, how do I forgive myself?

Story of Peter

- Fisherman, rough not polished
- Outspoken: speak before thinking
- Day before Good Friday said “I will die for you”
- Jesus says “before the rooster crows...3 times
- “Of course this will never happen, Jesus!”
- You know the story

Matthew 26:75:

“Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: “Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.” And he went outside and wept bitterly.”

- Can you imagine how he felt? Ever been there?
- Ever wait too long to say yes to a job?
- Didn’t take time to visit a person with cancer and then they died?
- Parents, ever feel a little guilt that you weren’t there for your kids growing up?
- How many today have regrets of some kind?Guilt? Shame?.....

2 Questions today:

**Have you been forgiven? Did you ask for it?
Have you forgiven yourself?**

If not, Today is the day to finally take that step.

“How Can I Forgive Myself?”

1. Come to God for **Forgiveness**

- Peter blew it! He denied his Lord. But did God write him off? Do you think that God still had a plan for Peter’s life?
- **Mark 16**

“But the angel said, ‘Do not be so surprised. You are looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who was crucified. He isn't here! He has been raised from the dead! Look, this is where they laid his body. Now go and give this message to his disciples, **including Peter.**”

Why? He needed to know forgiveness is available, ask for it, and then forgive ourselves

So what can we know about God’s forgiveness?

5 quick points:

1. God forgives **specifically.**

2. God forgives **instantly.**

3. God forgives **completely.**

He Never brings it up again. You are forgiven!

4. God forgives **repeatedly.**

5. God forgives **freely.**

POINT: You will never be able to forgive yourself until you first experience the real thing, which is God’s forgiveness.

Paul describes God’s forgiveness in **Colossians 2:14:**

“He has forgiven you all your sins: Christ has utterly wiped out the damning evidence of broken laws and commandments which always hung over our heads, and has completely annulled it by nailing it over his own head on the cross.” J. B. Phillips NT

2. Forgiving Myself requires Changing my patterns

- What did Peter do? 7 weeks later, he is preaching, sharing his faith
- He is in jail because of his changes!

Acts 4:13:

“The members of the counsel were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John. They could see that they were ordinary men who had no special training. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus.”

- **Would people say that YOU have been with Jesus lately? Change comes when we hang out with Jesus. Let us be ‘Jesus People’!**
 - **Stop** dwelling on your past
 - **Stop** writing about it on Facebook
 - **Stop** talking about it with your friends
 - **Find** Bible promises that remind you of God’s forgiveness!

Look at Philippians 2 in your NOTES:

“For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.”

3. Forgiving myself requires Creating a new future

- You have an important role to play.

How do you create something new?

- Use your past!

Jesus knew Peter’s potential before he fell away:

Matthew 16

Jesus tells Peter, “I say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. All the powers of hell will not conquer it.”

4. Realize God has a purpose for my past

- He doesn’t erase it, He heals it!
- Memories can be healed by His forgiveness!

- Do you know where you came from? So does God! And He still loves you!!

Do you have a 'Past'? Don't be ashamed of it. **God wants to use it.** Look at what Paul, a famously scarred individual, in 2 Corinthians. He writes this,

"God said, My gracious favor is all you need. My power works best in your weakness, so now I am glad to boast about my weakness so that the power of Christ may work through me."

There are 2 Roads to travel on. Which Road will you take today?

1. One with lots of baggage and unforgiveness &
2. The other one we have traveled with God, that of Forgiveness

"There is no condemnation for those who live in union with Christ Jesus."
–Romans 8:1

Listen to some who traveled the better road:

- **Moses** was a murderer and he had an anger problem, yet God used him to bring the Israelites out of captivity in Egypt
- **David** was an adulterer and a murderer, and yet God made him a man after His own heart and made him Israel's greatest king
- **Jonah** ran away from God, but God brought him back and used him to change an entire city
- **Paul** persecuted and murdered Christians, yet God used him to become the greatest evangelist and church planter in the history of the world
- **Peter**, yes even Peter, he denied Jesus, but God used him to become the central figure in the founding of the church in the first century.
- **To which journey will YOUR name be added to today?**

Let's pray