

MBC C3 LEADERS QUESTIONS
WEEK 4 - 10/31/21

Listen to, Learn about, and Love on one another

Read Luke 23:34. Share a moment you had this week or in the past, when you were convicted through the love of Christ to extend grace by forgiving someone who offended you.

‘Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.” And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice.’ (Luke 23:34, NLT)

The Crucifixion (23:26-56)

Jesus was crucified at the place called the Skull (“Golgotha” is based on the Aramaic and “Calvary” on the Latin for “skull”). Luke records three sayings of Jesus from the cross. The first is his prayer for the forgiveness of his enemies (v.34). The second is his promise that the dying thief will be with him that day in paradise (v.43). And in the third he commits his spirit to God (v.46; see Ps 31:5)... (Asbury Bible Commentary, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke+23%3A34&version=NLT>, accessed 10/29/21)

Getting Started with a Warm-Up:

- 1) Reflecting on Pastor Randy’s sermon on 10/31/21 about the Lord’s supper, share about a significant time when someone forgave you?

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- 2) Read Colossians 3:13-14. How do you make allowance, forgive, love, and live in unity with one another?

“Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony..” (Colossians 3:13-14, NLT)

3:13, 14 See Eph. 4:32–5:2, where Paul grounds Christian forbearance, forgiveness, and love explicitly in the example provided by the redemptive pattern of Christ’s work. ESV Reformation Study Bible, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=colossians+3%3A13&version=NLT>, accessed 10/29/21)

Getting Down to Business:

The following questions are following this format: Scripture/Observation, Application, and Prayer (SOAP).

1) Scripture/Observation:

- A) Read Ephesians. 4:31-32. What are some ways God's forgiveness has affected your life? What are some ways that you can forgive and still set boundaries?

“Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.”
(Ephesians 4:31-32, NLT)

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Goodwill, not ill will (4:31–32). “Get rid of” is a third person passive imperative (lit., “Let anger, etc., be gotten rid of”), but this does not mean God removes sinful behavior instead of the readers. The focus in this passage is on the responsibility of believers to act. Such acts of believers, of course, are presumed to be aided by the work of the Holy Spirit. “Anger” has already been treated in verse 26, but its importance is emphasized with two different words in verse 31 and by the association of anger with other words expressing ill will. The word translated “brawling” suggests not physical violence, but “shouting.”

All the words in verse 31 are intended to express hostility and actions that destroy human relations. Note the grouping of five words (similar to Col. 3:5, 8, 12). Groups of five were traditional in ancient lists of vices and virtues. Some suggest a progression in the five words, but this is uncertain. Bitterness is just as much the result of anger as its cause. “Malice” may be the most important word, for it encapsulates the hostility the other words describe. The contrast between 4:31 and 4:2–3, the description of a Christian’s calling, is striking.

In contrast to the badness and malice in verse 31, verse 32 calls for goodness, which applied to humans is understood as being “kind” (the same root is used for God’s kindness in 2:7). Paul also calls for compassion and forgiveness. Goodwill toward other people is assumed for the new being. As elsewhere, treatment of others is grounded in God’s treatment of us. Forgiveness (*charizomai*) is not Paul’s usual language for salvation. The idea of forgiveness of others being grounded in God’s forgiveness is reminiscent of Matthew 6:12, 14–15; 18:21–35; Luke 6:36. Note again the focus on salvation taking place in Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 5:19). (NIV Application Commentary, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4%3A31-32&version=NLT>, accessed 10/29/21)

B) Read Romans 12:9-10. What is most difficult for you in practicing forgiveness?

“Don’t just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.” (Romans 12:9-10, NLT)

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Loving participation (vv. 9-16). Here the emphasis is on the attitudes of those who exercise the spiritual gifts. It is possible to use a spiritual gift in an unspiritual way. Paul makes this same point in 1 Corinthians 13, the great “love chapter” of the New Testament. Love is the circulatory system of the spiritual body, which enables all the members to function in a healthy, harmonious way. This must be an honest love, not a hypocritical love (Rom. 12:9), and it must be humble, not proud (Rom. 12:10). “Preferring one another” means treating others as more important than ourselves (Phil. 2:1-4). (Warren Wiersbe BE Bible Study Series, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=romans+12&version=NLT>, accessed 10/29/21)

2) **Application:** Read Matthew 18:21-35. Describe what is happening in this story.

- A. When the king rebuked the unforgiving servant what did he link with forgiveness (v. 33)?

“ ‘Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ ”

- B. What is mercy and how does it differ from grace? (mercy = not getting what you deserve; grace = getting what you don’t deserve)

The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

21 Then 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?” 22 Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. 23 “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his

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servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. 26 “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ 27 The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. 28 “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. 29 “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’ 30 “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. 32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. 35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

V 21–35: COUNTING Just as God has forgiven us all our many sins, we should forgive others who sin against us. Their sins against us are minute compared with the immensity and amount of sin that we have committed against God and others. Forgiven people forgive others. (The Bible Panorama commentary, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2018%3A21-35&version=NIV>, accessed 10/30/21)

3) **Prayer:** “Lord, thank you for extending grace and mercy toward us when you forgave us of our sin against you. Help us to be conduits of your forgiveness as we deal with those who sin against us. Amen.”