

Beyond The Sermon

A Sermon Application Guide

Title: Battlegrounds of Forgiveness

This guide is designed to offer a simple tool for those wanting to take the next step with Sunday's message. You can print this guide to study on your own, or use it in a group and experience transformation together.

Message Theme & Prayer Focus

Betrayal & Forgiveness

"Father God, continue the work in my heart that you've started. You have so freely forgiven me, teach me to forgive the people in my life I may be holding bitterness toward. Thank you that I can bring my brokenness and sin to you, and thank you for your never ending grace. I rest in the privilege of your forgiveness. Amen."

Key Truths & Applications

In John 12, we can learn a great deal from Judas' bitterness toward Jesus, seeing the importance of not making rash decisions while we are bitter.

In 1 Samuel 18, King David lets an offense into his heart and the next day an evil spirit shows up.

What this means for us: Hanging onto bitterness opens the door for the devil to come into our lives, leading us to places that we don't want to be. The offense in our heart grows and ends up getting in the way of what the Lord wants for us. Many times, the offense runs free inside of us as a result of an unresolved conflict. We should be vigilant to do as Matthew 5 says, holding forgiving others, and resolving any anger, in the highest of priority.

Jesus told His disciples how often they were supposed to forgive—always. Most people believe that forgiveness is done by feelings, when we actually forgive by faith. By faith, we speak the decision to forgive and release someone from the offense they caused.

In the story of Esther, Haman boasted of all he had and all he desired, but he was still holding bitterness in his heart toward the Jews, souring every other area of his life.

What this means for us: Bitter people do not enjoy life. They miss out on all the things around them because they are focused on this bitterness that is tying them down. Anger is inside their

hard heart just waiting to explode on whoever is around them. Being kind and forgiving is the opposite of having a hard heart. We are to be the most forgiving community of forgiven people.

Three practical steps to forgiveness:

- Ask God to forgive us for our unforgiveness.
- Forgive the person who wronged us.
- Pray God's blessings for them.

By doing these, we break the power of the enemy in our lives. Every time we feel unforgiveness creep back up in our heart toward someone, we can repeat these steps and allow God to change our heart toward them and the situation. When we do, we'll experience the joy of being set free to live the life that God has for us.

Key Verses:

John 12:1-8 • John 13:2 • Hebrews 12:15 • Ecclesiastes 7:9 • Esther 5:11-13 • Matthew 5:23-24 • Matthew 18:21 • Matthew 18:32-35 • Matthew 19:7-8 • Ephesians 6:10-12

Declarations

"I accept God's forgiveness in my life, living a lifestyle of forgiveness toward others. I choose to bring my bitterness to God, in every offense, so that He can first forgive me. I carry that forgiveness to those who have wronged me, and receive God's heart toward them. I know that as I do, my heart will be changed, and I will live in the freedom and in the fullness of life that God has for me."

What's Next?

Now it's time to write down anything that the Lord has spoken to you. Praise Him, Thank Him and ask the Holy Spirit to help you walk this out.

Scripture References

Battlegrounds of Forgiveness

Luke 23:34 ESV

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do..."

John 12:1-8 NKJV

Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."

Mark 14:10-11 NKJV

Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Him to them. And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. So he sought how he might conveniently betray Him.

Hebrews 12:15 TNT

See to it that no one falls away from God's grace, that no bitterness springs up to cause trouble and spoil everybody's life.

1 Samuel 30:6 NIV

David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God.

Ephesians 4:26-27 NKJV

"Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.

1 Samuel 18:7-10 NKJV

So the women sang as they danced, and said: "Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands." Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed *only* thousands. Now *what* more can he have but the kingdom?" So Saul eyed David from that day forward. And it happened on the next day that the distressing spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied inside the house. So David played *music* with his hand, as at other times; but *there was* a spear in Saul's hand.

Hebrews 12:15 NKJV

looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

Ecclesiastes 7:9 NKJV

Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, For anger rests in the bosom of fools.

Esther 5:11-13 NKJV

Then Haman told them of his great riches, the multitude of his children, everything in which the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the officials and servants of the king. Moreover Haman said, "Besides, Queen Esther invited no one but me to come in with the king to the banquet that she prepared; and tomorrow I am again invited by her, along with the king. Yet all this avails me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."

Matthew 18:21-22 NLT

Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" "No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven!"

Luke 17:5 NKJV

And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

Matthew 18:23-35 NKJV

Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took *him* by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.

Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

John 13:2 NKJV

And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him,

Ephesians 6:12 TLB

—the evil rulers of the unseen world, those mighty satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world; and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit world.

Matthew 19:7-9 NKJV

They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery."

Ephesians 4:32 NKJV

And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Matthew 19:8 NKJV

He said to them, "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

Romans 10:10 KJV

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Luke 6:28 NIV

bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.

Luke 6:28 NKJV

bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

James 2:26 NKJV

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Mark 11:25 NKJV

“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.

Luke 10:19 NKJV

Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Ephesians 1:18 NKJV

the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints