***TEACHER***

**Introduction**

**I Believe in God, but…**

It’s hard for me to forgive.

**Analyze this statement.** “I forgive you, but I will never forget.”

**Hebrews 8:12**

**What Does My Heart Say About Forgiveness**

What does it mean to forgive?

**ἀφίημι- to dismiss or release someone or someth. from a place or one’s presence; to release from legal or moral obligation or consequence, *cancel, remit, pardon;* to move away, w. implication of causing a separation,** ***leave, depart from***

How do you feel about forgiveness? OR How do you think this world perceives forgiveness?

How does what Peter says in **Matthew 18:21** line up with our world view of forgiveness?

**What does the Bible say about forgiveness?**

Let’s follow that Peter story to the end. What is Jesus response to our sinful hearts?

**Matthew 18:21-22** Without reading ahead, what do you suppose Jesus answer means?

**Matthew 18:23-27** Who showed weakness here?

**What would have taken more strength? For Jesus to have come down off the cross OR to stay there and die at the hands of sinful men? And that was the greatest act of forgiveness of all. Really the greatest act of strength that we have ever seen! Sin is weakness, forgiveness is not weakness.**

**Matthew 18:28-35** So what? What does this all mean? Why should we be willing to forgive (REALLY FORGIVE) those who hurt us?

**But I still Struggle**

React: How can I ever forget how terrible they were to me! I want to forgive them, but I am not sure that I *CAN* forget!

**Situation #1:** Bob was the treasurer for the local Christian high school. Recently they learned that Bob over the course of ten years Bob had embezzled $250,000 from the athletic fund (it’s a big school, just roll with it). What does forgiveness look like in this instance?

How might **Matthew 10:16,** help us in this situation?

**There is a big difference between forgiveness and trust. Forgiveness means that you are not holding that action against them anymore! It does not mean that you trust them completely again. Trust is built over time, forgiveness is given in an instance. It may take time before the trust is there again.**

**Situation #2:** Susan just found out that her husband Derrick got a DUI on his way home from a bar, after he had told her that he had to “work late.” Derrick is crushed that he has let down his wife, his family, and most importantly, his God. What might forgiveness look like in this scenario?

**1 Corinthians 13:4-5** might help as you think about this situation.

**Situation #3:** Dan’s best friend at work, Willy, just lied about Dan to the boss, so that he would get the promotion instead of Dan. When he was confronted with his sin, he admitted his fault, and told the boss everything. Unfortunately, the boss didn’t want to make any more changes so he kept Willy in the new promotion, and told Dan he would keep him in mind for next time. What obstacles to forgiveness might arise from this situation?

How might you use the passages below to help Dan at this time?

**Colossians 3:13**

**Romans 8:28**

Summary:

Why is forgiveness so hard?

**Romans 7:18-20**

What comfort can we have, even when we find it hard to forgive?

**Micah 7:18-19**