

Forgiveness: The Gift of the Magic Eyes

Matthew 18:21-35

1. Share a time when someone misunderstood you or was angry with you for something that you did not do.
2. Can you recall a time when you had a difficult time forgiving someone? How did you view this person at that time?
3. Read Matthew 18:21-35. Why was the Master angry at the servant who had been forgiven a large amount of debt? What is the warning contained in this story?
4. Why do you think God's forgiveness of us is conditional upon our willingness to forgive others?
5. Pastor Mark tells the story about Ivan and Hilda. At first, Ivan declares he has forgiven Hilda, but in reality he has not forgiven her. He resents her and mistreats her as a way of subtly punishing her. Instead of bringing him peace, this behavior makes him more hateful and angry. Why do you think this is so?
6. It is possible to get a sense of personal satisfaction out of hating someone for what they have done. Why is it dangerous to get comfortable with your hate the way Ivan did?
7. Pastor Mark points out that forgiveness requires us to see ourselves in a certain way. We must see ourselves as sinners saved by grace. How does this view of ourselves help us to be more forgiving toward others?
8. Pastor Mark talks about the process of "reframing" the way we view others who have hurt us, choosing to view them as flawed and hurting people rather than as evil enemies. How can this reframing help us in the process of forgiveness?
9. How did "the gift of the magic eyes" help Ivan to change his view of Hilda?
10. Is there someone in your life you struggle to forgive? How might you see them through the "magic eyes" and view them in a way that helps you to begin the process of forgiveness?
11. When Ivan saw Hilda differently, he began to treat her differently. And the more he treated her with kindness and compassion, the lighter his heart became. How can treating people with kindness help us to move forward on the path of forgiveness?