

it's a must

Whenever someone declares “Jesus is Lord!”, that person has forfeited the right to decide which of Jesus’ commands they will obey and which they will ignore. To be a disciple of Jesus is to live a “must” life in a “maybe” world, and this series will examine what that looks like.

Week 5: Forgiveness Is A Must!

1. Rick began by pointing out that “*The Bible does not say ‘forgive and forget’, but Jesus will not let us forget that we must forgive.*” Why is this so important to remember? How would you counsel someone who struggles to forgive someone who has wronged them?
2. **“THEN IF...” Read Luke 17:3-4 & Matthew 6:12.** Why does Jesus emphasize the importance of forgiveness even when others repeatedly wrong us? What happens when we do not forgive? Follow up: Rick said, “*Do not use Jesus’ words to condone or excuse abuse, and do not confuse forgiveness with reconciliation.*” Why is it crucial to keep this in mind?
3. **“EVEN IF...” We must embrace the unfairness of the gospel.** Understand that nothing about our salvation is fair. How would you explain the implications of that statement to a friend who is exploring a relationship with God? Follow up: **Read Ephesians 1:4-7.** What does the fact that God loved and chose us before He made the world show us about His character and nature? How does knowing this change your view of yourself and of God?
4. **“EVEN IF...” We must return grace because we’ve received grace. Read Matthew 18:21-35.** What resonates with you the most from that parable? How has God’s forgiveness in your life motivated you to be more forgiving? Follow up: How can **Colossians 3:12-13** help you grow in this area?
5. **“EVEN IF...” We must believe in the power of good.** Forgiving is not endorsing passivity, but it is intentionally choosing to respond to evil with aggressive goodness. **Read Romans 12:21.** What does it mean to respond to evil with aggressive goodness, and how can this help us in forgiving others? Follow up: When have you seen evil overcome by good?
6. **“EVEN IF...” We must trust that God is just. Read Romans 12:17-20.** Why is it pivotal that we leave judgment in God’s court? How can we trust in God’s justice when facing hurt and betrayal from others? What can we learn from the example of Jesus (**1 Peter 2:23**)?
7. **“EVEN IF...” We must realize that bitterness is a prison. Read Ephesians 4:31-32.** Why is it essential to let go of bitterness and anger? Rick went on to say, “*His wounds must shape how I respond to mine.*” How can knowing this lead to freedom? Practice: Spend a few moments silently finishing this prayer: “Lord, in Jesus’s name I speak forgiveness to...”

