

**Forgive, as You Have Been Forgiven**  
**Part One- Matthew 18:15-17**

Question: What baggage are you hanging on to because you have not sought forgiveness?

Main Point: Forgive those who have sinned against you.

Why Should I Forgive?

- The measure which we forgive will be the measure God will forgive us.

“For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

-Jesus (Matt 6:14-15)

- We cannot properly worship without seeking reconciliation with those we have sinned against.

“So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

-Jesus (Matt 5:23-24)

What do I do when I've been hurt?

- Go to the person that sinned against you first. (Matt 18:15) *Don't complain about it to others!*
- If a private conversation does not work, take a few trusted witnesses. (Matt 18:16) *Don't gossip or slander!*
- If a few trusted witnesses do not change the situation, bring it to the attention of the church. (Matt 18:17a) *Don't use the situation to show how good you are and how bad the other person is!*
- If all efforts have failed and reconciliation is not possible, then and only then treat them as a non-Christian. (Matt 18:17b) *Don't use the situation to drive someone away from the church!*

The goal of forgiveness is reconciliation and restoration of a right relationship. The goal is NEVER to prove ourselves right, to show we are a victim or to tear another person down.

Closing Question: Who do you need to forgive today? Are you willing to let go of the baggage of the past through forgiveness?