**Seeking God’s Plan for Forgiveness**

**The Model of Forgiveness**

3 principles to benefit from our divine model of forgiveness:

**I. Give Careful Attention to the Way God Forgives**

v. 32 - …forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

v. 32 - just as

A. He initiates the process

Romans 5:8 - But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 4:19 - We love Him because He first loved us.

Ephesians 1:3-8 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us.

B. He forgives freely

v. 32 - in Christ…

Romans 8:31-32 - What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

C. He forgives fully

Psalm 103:12 - As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

James 3:13-18 - Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

D. He forgives eternally

Ephesians 1:13 - In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

Ephesians 4:30 - Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

**II. Use God’s General Principle of Change to Create a Platform for Forgiveness of Others**

A. Do not make forgiveness decisions on the basis of your feelings/desires at any given moment

1. It is possible to be deceived by your feelings

2. Sometimes the last thing you should do is follow your feelings

B. Use situations that require forgiveness as an opportunity to build your life on holiness and truth

Ephesians 4:24 - and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

C. Learn the power of replacement in the process of change

**III. Apply God’s Principle of Change to the Specific Forgiveness Situations You are Facing Right Now**

A. What has to be put off

1. bitterness

- pikria – a smoldering resentment

- “The spirit of irritability that keeps a person in perpetual animosity, making him sour and venomous” – John MacArthur

2. wrath

- thumos – wild rage

- flaring outbursts

3. anger

- orge – internal smoldering, settled indignation or hostility

4. clamor

- krauge – shout or outcry of strife, public quarreling or brawling

5. slander

- blasphemia – ongoing defamation of another person that rises from a bitter heart

6. malice

- kakia – evil, the desire to harm others or see them suffer

B. What should be put on

1. kind

- benevolent, helpful

2. tenderhearted

- compassionate, sympathetic

3. forgiving

- giving up your right to revenge