

ROLLING WITH THE PUNCHES

Big Idea

Pastor Curt – Part 1

For most of us, it feels like we have been hit from all sides over the last six months. The question that comes is, how do we survive when we're getting pummeled from all the angles? Bad days will happen! Difficult times will happen! We need to learn how to deal with these circumstances and today we start a new series called **Roll With The Punches**, beginning with a message on Forgiveness.

The most amazing thing Jesus did was to forgive those who betrayed him (Judas), falsely accused him (at his trial), rejected him (Peter 3 times, fellow Jews), abused him (soldiers punched, spit, pulled out parts of his beard, whipped, so he was beyond recognition [see Isaiah 53], and humiliated him (stripped naked); all this was done in a 12 hour span before being hung on a cross! How did Jesus respond? The very first words Jesus spoke after he was nailed to the cross were: **"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."** (Luke 23:34) Why did Jesus say this? Because His love was greater than the sin debt that was owed. Forgiveness is the first step we need to take when we are absorbing the punches of life - and Jesus modeled it for us. **"That's why he (Jesus) had to enter into every detail of human life. Then, when he came before God as high priest to get rid of the people's sins, he would have already experienced it all himself - all the pain, all the testing—and would be able to help where help was needed."** (Hebrews 2:17-18 Message) Forgiveness is what we all want from God but is so difficult to give to others.

We are to forgive everyone who seems to be ruining our life. It is possible! Pastor Curt gave us three simple yet profound steps to forgive others. **Pray for them. Bless them and Do Good to them.** And, when we do these, we are able to roll with the punches and living the life God intended for us to live.

Discussion Questions

- Discuss the 3 things we need to do to forgive like Jesus and how approaching forgiveness like Jesus did can help us to forgive both major and minor offenses.
- Discuss the statement "forgiving someone won't change the past, but it can change your future."
- Jesus has forgiven all of us of much, how can remembering the grace of God's forgiveness help us to forgive other people? What is one thing we can do daily that will remind us of God's grace?

Prayer Focus

Pray for anyone that has hurt you and you have not yet forgiven. Take your hurt to God, ask Him to change your heart..

Next Steps

Ask the Lord what your NEXT STEP needs to be to truly surrender the hurt and un-forgiveness to Him. Perhaps it's taking the step of praying for that person sincerely or maybe it's writing a letter or making a phone call. In your time of prayer truly seek the Lord for your next step so that you can forgive and be set free.

Leader Tip

Offer a time of prayer for anyone that is currently dealing with the punches of this life. During the next week, send a text or email of encouragement to your group and include a verse or two that you find helpful on forgiveness.