

FORGIVENESS AS THE GOAL OF
TRAINING CHAMPIONS FOR CHRIST

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO TRAIN
CHAMPIONS FOR CHRIST?

CHRISTIANITY AND FORGIVENESS?

- Martin Marty
 - Buddhism = suffering
 - Islam = submission
 - Judaism = Shema Israel ("Hear O Israel")
 - Christianity = forgiveness

FORGIVING LOVE

- From the Christian theological perspective, forgiveness is God's unconditional forgiving love that we extend to those who hurt us.
 - Romans 5:8
 - Matthew 5:44
 - John 13:34
- Then, training champions for Christ includes at its core training students to develop forgiving love.

WHAT IS HUMAN FORGIVENESS?

- These are not forgiveness:
 - Forgetting
 - Pardoning
 - Condoning/excusing
 - Calming down
 - Saying, "I forgive you."
 - Reconciliation
 - Throwing justice out the window

WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

- “When unjustly hurt by another, we forgive when we overcome the resentment toward the offender, not by denying our right to the resentment, but instead by trying to offer the wrongdoer compassion, benevolence, and love; as we give these, we as forgivers realize that the offender does not necessarily have a right to such gifts.” – Robert Enright

WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

- “Forgiveness is offering love to a person in the face of injustice and at a time when that person is most unlovable” --Robert Enright
- “Forgiveness is the final form of love” -- Reinhold Niebuhr
- “Forgiveness is the name of love practiced among people who love poorly” –Henri Nouwen

WHY IS FORGIVENESS SO IMPORTANT?

- Because of our identity in Christ:
 - “I am so flawed that Jesus had to die for me yet I’m so loved and valued that Jesus was glad to die for me.” Tim Keller
 - “I am flawed yet loved.”

WHY SHOULD CHRISTIANS CARE ABOUT FORGIVENESS?

- Out of love for God
- To imitate Christ
- To share God's love

“I WANT PEOPLE TO HAVE THE HEART THAT
GOD HAS. THIS MAY HAVE JUST BEEN ABOUT
GOD AND WHAT WOULD GOD WANT ME TO DO
IN THIS SITUATION, WITHOUT EVEN LOOKING
AT RACE.” - BRANDT JEAN

“MY MISSION IS: ‘TO DO ALL I CAN TO PROMOTE FORGIVENESS IN EVERY WILLING HEART, HOME AND HOMELAND.’ THAT MISSION MUST GOVERN THE CONTENT OF MY DECISIONS.” - EV WORTHINGTON

HOW DO WE FORGIVE?

- “How do we learn to forgive? By knowing that we, too, need to be forgiven” – Mother Teresa
- Humility

HOW DO WE FORGIVE?

- “Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you” Philippians 4:9
- Put it into practice!

HOW DO WE FORGIVE?

- Three perspectives:
 - Personal perspective
 - Global perspective
 - Cosmic perspective

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- Would trying to see your colleagues, students, or anyone that God puts in your life in the way God sees them, through the lens of God's forgiving love, make a difference?
- 1) Remember your identity in Christ, 2) start from the position of humility, and 3) practice seeing others (including your students and people in your life who hurt you) from God's perspectives.

QUESTIONS?