

How to Have a Happy Heart: Forgiveness

Here are Questions and Answers for parents to ask their child about forgiveness; Christian Values that are learned with forgiveness; and questions to develop critical thinking skills so that you can develop how to think.

Q1: What does forgiveness mean?

A1: Forgiveness means to "cancel a debt." When we forgive someone, we release them from the burden of their wrongdoing, just as we have been forgiven by God for our own sins.

Q2: Why should we forgive others?

A2: We forgive others because God forgave us first. Through the sacrificial love of Jesus, who died on the cross for our sins, we received forgiveness and redemption. As 1 John 1:9 states, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

Q3: How does God demonstrate forgiveness?

A3: God's forgiveness knows no bounds. He forgives us completely, removing our sins "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12). This exemplifies the depth of His love and mercy towards us.

Q4: How can we tell if we've truly forgiven someone?

A4: Genuine forgiveness is reflected in our actions. When we forgive someone, we extend kindness towards them and welcome them back into our lives. We show love and compassion, just as God shows us.

Q5: What happens if we choose not to forgive?

A5: Refusing to forgive leads to bitterness and resentment, poisoning our hearts and hindering our ability to experience joy and love. As Ephesians 4:31-32 warns, "Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Q6: Are there examples of forgiveness in the Bible?

A6: Yes, Job's story in Job 42:10 demonstrates the power of forgiveness. Despite facing immense suffering and betrayal, Job forgave his friends and prayed for them. In return, God blessed Job abundantly, restoring his fortunes twofold.

Q7: How should we approach correcting someone who has wronged us?

A7: Galatians 6:1 advises us to restore others with gentleness when they falter. It encourages us to address their wrongdoing with humility and compassion, just as we would want to be corrected if we were in the wrong.

Q8: Can you share verses where Jesus teaches about forgiveness?

A8: In Matthew 18:21-22, Peter asks Jesus how many times he should forgive someone who sins against him, to which Jesus replies, "not seven times, but seventy-seven times." Similarly, in Luke 17:3-4, Jesus emphasizes the importance of forgiving others, even when they repeatedly wrong us.

Q9: What is the role of rebuke in forgiveness?

A9: The role of rebuke is to address wrongdoing and encourage repentance in a spirit of love and truth. In Luke 17:3-4, Jesus instructs us to rebuke our brother or sister if they sin against us. This involves gently correcting them and guiding them towards reconciliation. When accompanied by genuine repentance, rebuke opens the door to forgiveness, allowing healing and restoration to take place.

In summary, forgiveness is a cornerstone of love and compassion. By extending forgiveness to others, we emulate the grace and mercy that God has shown us, cultivating hearts filled with joy and peace.

The chapel lesson on forgiveness encompasses several Christian values, including compassion, humility, grace, and reconciliation. Here's how we can shape critical thinking questions to evaluate and adopt these values:

1. Compassion:

- Critical thinking question: How does showing compassion towards someone who has wronged us reflect Jesus' teachings and example?

2. Humility:

- Critical thinking question: Why is it important to approach forgiveness with humility, both in seeking forgiveness and extending it to others?

3. Grace:

- Critical thinking question: How does understanding and accepting God's grace towards us influence our ability to extend grace to others?

4. Reconciliation:

- Critical thinking question: What steps can we take to facilitate reconciliation with someone we have forgiven, and why is reconciliation important in the process of forgiveness?

5. Empathy:

- Critical thinking question: How does putting ourselves in the shoes of the person who wronged us help us understand the importance of forgiveness and empathy?

6. Responsibility:

- Critical thinking question: In what ways does taking responsibility for our actions contribute to the process of seeking and granting forgiveness?

7. Respect:

- Critical thinking question: How does showing respect for the dignity and worth of each person influence our approach to forgiveness and reconciliation?

8. Gratitude:

- Critical thinking question: How can cultivating a spirit of gratitude for the forgiveness we have received from God motivate us to extend forgiveness to others?

By asking these critical thinking questions, students can delve deeper into the values underpinning the concept of forgiveness and explore how these values can be applied in their own lives and relationships.

Questions for parents to teach you how to develop critical thinking questions:

Here are the questions rewritten with a focus on Bloom's Taxonomy levels and framed for parents to use with their elementary school children:

1. Remembering (Knowledge):

- Can you recall a story from the Bible where Jesus forgave someone?**

2. Understanding (Comprehension):

- How would you explain forgiveness to a friend who doesn't understand what it means?**

3. Applying (Application):

- Can you think of a time when you forgave someone? How did it make you feel?**

4. Analyzing (Analysis):

- Why do you think forgiveness is important in our relationships with others?**

5. Evaluating (Evaluation):

- Do you think it's always easy to forgive someone? Why or why not?**

6. Creating (Synthesis):

- If you were in a situation where someone hurt your feelings, how could you respond with forgiveness?**

By engaging children in these questions, parents can help them not only understand the concept of forgiveness but also develop critical thinking skills and shape Christian values in their daily lives.