

STUDY GUIDE FOR VIDEO
“Forgiveness: A Miracle of Love”

Discussion Questions:

1. If you were the victim of Paul Keller’s destructive activity, what would be your reaction? What would have been your response?
2. The pastor of the church destroyed by arson fire went to visit Paul in jail saying that he felt compelled by Christ to go. Read Matthew 5:43-48 and Romans 12:9-21. What does the New Testament teach us about the way we treat those who sin against us?
3. How did people respond when they heard that the pastor had offered forgiveness and prayer support to the arsonists and his family? Did everyone agree this should be done?
4. Pastor Rouse suggests that forgiveness is counter-cultural. What does our culture expect us to do when we are wronged? How do people normally respond to someone who has hurt them?
5. Why is forgiveness so difficult? Why is it a good thing that forgiving is not an easy thing to do? Are there times when we shouldn’t forgive? Why or why not?
6. Why is it important to forgive? The video suggests that God can use the power of forgiveness to bring healing both to the victims and to the one who has wronged them. How do you think Pastor Rouse and the Trinity Lutheran Church congregation experienced healing? How did Paul and his family experience healing?
7. Where does one find the resources (the power within) to forgive? God’s word suggest that one of the reasons we can forgive is because we have first been forgiven by God in Christ Jesus. (Read Ephesians 1:7 and 4:32; also Colossians 1:14 and 3:13).
8. What did you find most moving and helpful about this story of mercy and grace? Was there anything that disturbed you?

For Further Study:

Did you know that there are more than 125 references in the Bible to forgiveness? To learn more about what Jesus teaches concerning forgiveness, read the following passages:

Matthew 6:12-15

Disciples ask Jesus how to pray

Matthew 18:21-25

Disciples ask Jesus how many times to forgive

Luke 5:17-26

Jesus is rebuked for healing and forgiving sins

Luke 7:36-50

Jesus is anointed by a sinful woman

John 8:1-11

Jesus saves a woman accused of adultery

John 13:31-35

Jesus gives his disciples a new commandment to love others

Luke 17:3-4

Jesus says if one repents, one should forgive

Luke 23:34

Jesus forgives those who crucify him