



I. INTRO/REVIEW

A. Where we've been in this series: 70x7

- Forgiveness is a necessary fundamental of the Christian life

Luke 17:4-5 (NIV) ⁴Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them. ⁵The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

- Unforgiveness creates a debt/debtor relationship
- The path starts with offense but the destination is an unresponsive heart (Matt 24:10-12)

B. Forgiving unfair

- Joseph had 22 years of unfair
 - Betrayed by his family
 - Wrongly accused and condemned to prison – for doing the right thing
 - Forgotten in prison
- You can never make fair out of something that's unfair, because unfair will never be fair

C. Generally the most difficult person to forgive is ... ME

Ephesians 4:32 (TLB) Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God has forgiven you because you belong to Christ.

Luke 22:31-32 (NLT) ³¹“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. ³²But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers.”

D. What are you trying to fill the blank with?

II. THE TEMPTATION TO SUBSTITUTE

A. Jesus was tempted by the devil

Matthew 4:1-4 (TLB) Then Jesus was led out into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit, to be tempted there by Satan. ²For forty days and forty nights he ate nothing and became very hungry. ³Then Satan tempted him to get food by changing stones into loaves of bread. “It will prove you are the Son of God,” he said. ⁴But Jesus told him, “No! For the Scriptures tell us that bread won't feed men's souls: obedience to every word of God is what we need.”

- This is more of a temptation to substitute than it is to sin

B. I was experiencing – the weight of guilt

- Guilt brings shame and condemnation with it



Genesis 2:16 (NIV) And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;

Genesis 3:1 (NIV) Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

- God was protecting Eve from something she was never supposed to carry

Psalm 38:4 (NLT) My guilt overwhelms me—it is a burden too heavy to bear.

D. The cover up

Genesis 2:25 (NKJV) And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

- God never intended humanity to experience shame

Genesis 3:7 (NKJV) Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

- The loins are the place where intimacy is experienced and life produced

III. FREE

A. The weight of guilt

Psalm 38:4 (NLT) My guilt overwhelms me—it is a burden too heavy to bear.

- There is a difference between being guilty and feeling guilty

Romans 3:21-25 (NIRV) ²¹ But now God has shown us his saving power without the help of the law. But the Law and the Prophets tell us about this. ²² We are made right with God by putting our faith in Jesus Christ. This happens to all who believe. It is no different for the Jews than for the Gentiles. ²³ Everyone has sinned. No one measures up to God’s glory. ²⁴ The free gift of God’s grace makes us right with him. Christ Jesus paid the price to set us free. ²⁵ God gave Christ as a sacrifice to pay for sins through the spilling of his blood. So God forgives the sins of those who have faith. God did all this to prove that he does what is right. He is a God of mercy. So he did not punish for their sins the people who lived before Jesus lived.

Psalm 86:5 (NLT) O Lord, you are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for your help.