Pastor David Patterson
The Prison of Offense

[Ephesians 4:31-32] Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. 32 Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.
[Luke 17:1]
Then Jesus said to his disciples, “It is impossible that no offenses should come”

[Matthew 18:15 (amp)]
“If a fellow believer hurts you (sins against you), go to them and tell them in private, point out the offense and work it out between the two of you. If they listen, you’ve made a friend (you have won that person back).

[Matthew 18:22-35]
…Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. 
23 “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. 26 “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ 27 The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. 28 “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. 29 “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’ 30 “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened 32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. 35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

• Make a decision
  • Decide to forgive those who have hurt you.

• Make a confession
  • Confess that you are forgiving them and blessing them
• Have a conversation
  • Go to them and forgive and God will be with you.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some relationship challenges you have experienced?
2. What are some relationship "Myths" (time heals all wounds, the grass is always greener on the other side, they owe me an apology) have you tried... How did that work out for you?
3. Why is it so difficult to simply go talk to the person who hurt you, why is it so hard to forgive?
4. When people come to us with an offense they have toward someone else, what should our response be?
5. Who do you need to forgive? What is it that they took from you? If your going to forgive you need to understand what you have lost through their actions.
6. What can you do this week to move your relationships toward healing through your obedience to Gods Word?
7. Pray together over the hurts we have endured that they would loose their hold on us so we could walk in freedom through forgiveness.