What does appropriately unjust forgiveness look like?

A. It resists the urge to punish.

The false promises of anger to secure justice (Ja. 1:19-20).

B. It resists the urge to pretend that no harm was done.

C. It pays the cost of the sin.

In marriage, the cost is often relational.

"Forgiveness" sometimes fails to lead to reconciliation because it settles for being moderately unfair rather than anti-fair.

While forgiveness is costly, unforgiveness is even more costly.

Our forgiveness is powered by Christ's (Eph. 4:32, Is. 53:4-6).

V. Conclusion

When we respond with grace, marriage is a sweet and safe picture of the God who showed us grace.

A few really good books on marriage which you can get and read on your own…

- *Love that Lasts* by Gary & Betsy Riccuci
- *This Momentary Marriage* by John Piper
- *What Did You Expect?* by Paul Tripp
- *When Sinners Say I Do* by Dave Harvey
- *The Meaning of Marriage* by Tim and Kathy Keller

If you have questions or comments on this class, please contact Jamie Dunlop at jamie.dunlop@capbap.org or Mark Kalenak at mdkalenak@gmail.com.

Marriage Core Seminar, Class #5
Grace in Marriage

I. Introduction

Marriage is unfair. Grace is the glory of marriage, and it shows off the glory of *God's* grace.

II. Grace

A. What is grace?

> "But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them." – Luke 6:27-31

Grace is favor that's granted regardless of what's deserved, and quite often *despite* what's deserved.

B. What does grace look like in marriage?

1. Kindness

"And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them" (Luke 6:31, the "golden rule")

2. Mercy

The "golden rule" is intended specifically for when we've been wronged.

3. Forbearance

   "Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense." – Proverbs 19:11

   Forbearance means covering over your spouses sin and wiping the slate clean.

   When we shouldn't forbear:
   - Their sin is too big.
   - Their sin is too dangerous to them.
   - You're not godly enough to truly forbear.

C. How can we show grace?

   "But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."
   – Luke 6:35-36

1. "Your reward will be great"

2. "You will be sons of the Most High"

3. "For he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil"

III. Self-Righteousness

"Self-righteousness is a sense of moral superiority that appoints us as prosecutor of other people's sinfulness or weakness."'
(Based on Dave Harvey's definition in *When Sinners Say I Do*, page 91.)

"Let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."
– Romans 14:13-17

The *real* problem is not their sin or error but your self-righteousness.

Dave Harvey's questions to identify self-righteousness in yourself
- Am I self-confident that I see the supposed "facts" clearly?
- Am I quick to assign motives when I feel I've been wronged?
- Do I find it easy to build a case against someone that makes me seem right and him or her seem wrong?
- Do I ask questions with built-in assumptions that I believe will be proven right? Or do I ask impartial questions—the kind that genuinely seek new information regardless of its implications for my preferred outcome?
- Am I overly concerned about who is to blame for something?

IV. Forgiveness

Forgiveness is the cancelling of a debt in full that someone else has accrued.

Matthew 18:21-35: Forgiven sinners forgive.

Forgiveness always costs something because forgiveness pays the cost of the offense. Too often, what passes for forgiveness isn't true forgiveness because it has not embraced the true and complete injustice of forgiveness. Unless forgiveness is unjust, it is not true forgiveness.