

## Forgiveness

- I. Introduction:
  - a. **(Mark 11:25)** “And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”
  - b. Forgiveness is important: - only way for fallible people to work together is if there is the ability for forgiveness
    - i. Home
    - ii. Church
    - iii. Community
    - iv. Nation
- II. Four Fundamental Reasons Why it is Necessary that We Forgive One Another
  - a. God commands it.
    - i. **(Mark 11:25)** “And when ye stand praying, forgive...”
    - ii. Every command of God is necessary and essential
      1. **(Matt 4:4)** “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”
    - iii. Gospel preachers contend with sectarian people that the commandment of baptism must be obeyed exactly as it is given to us in the book of the Lord.
      1. In the same way, we may well contend with members of the church that this command to forgive one another is absolutely essential
  - b. Jesus Christ has set us the example of forgiveness
    - i. **(Luke 23:34)** “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”
    - ii. Christ is our great archetype.
      1. All things that are asked of us, Christ did
        - a. Submitted to God’s will – “thy will be done”
        - b. Baptized – to fulfill all righteousness
        - c. Forgave those that sinned against him
      2. One thing that is asked of us that Christ couldn’t do is repent – had no sins to repent of
  - c. We ourselves have been forgiven
    - i. **(Eph 4:32)** “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”
      1. When we find it hard to forgive others – think about all that God has forgiven from you – Think about all the commandments that you have broken and have been forgiven
    - ii. **(Col 3:13)** “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”
  - d. In order that we may be forgiven in the future

- i. **(Matt 6:14-15)** “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”
  - 1. If you fail to forgive, God will not forgive you. – undeserving of such great grace, when you can shed little grace to your fellow man
- ii. **(Mark 11:25)** “And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”
- iii. God’s estimate of an unforgiving spirit
  - 1. **(Matt 18:23-35)**
    - a. Summary of this parable
      - i. Certain King – God
      - ii. Servants – Christians
      - iii. Ten thousand talents – (debt) Sins – Transgressions
        - 1. “In one period, the silver talent represented six thousand drachmas, or six thousand days' wages for an average Palestinian worker; ten thousand talents would thus be roughly sixty million days' wages (in another period, 100 million).” (from IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament by Craig S. Keener)
        - 2. “Roughly speaking, we might compare one talent with the modern "million.”” (from Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament)
        - 3. Servant promises to repay – the king knew this to be impossible
    - iv. Fellow Servant – Fellow Christian – Brother
    - v. Hundred pence – meager compared to the ten thousand talents
      - 1. “One hundred denarii represented one hundred days of a common worker's wages.” (from IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament by Craig S. Keener)
    - vi. Took him by the throat – relentless attitude that we have with our brethren
    - vii. Fellow servants saw and was saddened – the disheartened discouragement that our brothers and sisters feel when they see such an act

2. No plainer illustration of God's attitude toward an unforgiving spirit could be found than this

### III. Some Questions About Forgiveness

#### a. Should we forgive one who will not repent?

##### i. No

1. We forgive as God forgives – his forgiveness is righteous – God does not forgive us if we will not repent

##### ii. We are to hold no ill will towards the brother

1. **(Rom 2:4)** “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”
2. We are to seek to do him good and seek to lead him to repentance.

- a. We ought to do so good to a brother that sins against us that our very goodness will lead him to repent of that evil.

##### iii. We are not to pay him back for the hurt

1. **(Rom 12:17-21)** “Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

#### b. How often must we forgive one another?

- i. **(Matt 18:21-22)** “Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

- ii. **(Luke 17:4)** “And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.”

1. In other words we are always willing and ready to shed forgiveness – unlimited number of times

#### c. How should we forgive one another?

##### i. From the heart

1. All forgiveness must be full and complete – We must forgive as God forgives

##### 2. Can not forgive and continue to hold a grudge

- a. Serious and real problem – Solomon knew this

- i. **(Prov 18:19)** “A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.”

- ii. When a brother offends you and sins against you the last thing you want to do is call him brother – rather pay back
      - b. We cannot bury the hatchet and leave the handle sticking out.
      - c. When one repents of their wronging us, must be full, free, and complete – like the forgiveness that God grants to us when we sin against him
    - ii. Some say, “I’m going to forgive you but in the future I’ll have nothing to do with you.”
      - 1. What if God said that?!
    - iii. Some say, “I’ll forgive but won’t forget” – that’s not forgiveness! – God forgives and forgets
      - 1. **(Isa 43:25)** “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will **not remember** thy sins.”
      - 2. **(Heb 8:12)** “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”
    - iv. If we say these things then, God will not forgive us!
- IV. God places responsibility on both the offended and the offender
  - a. The Offender
    - i. **(Matt 5:23-26)** “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.”
    - ii. If I have offended a brother, there is no sense in coming to worship God until I have seen the brother and made proper adjustment!
      - 1. God will not accept my worship
  - b. The Offended
    - i. **(Matt 18:15-17)** “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”
      - 1. If one offends me – My responsibility
        - a. **First** – Tell him alone that he offended me

- b. **Second** – Tell him with two or three witness that he offended me
- c. **Third** – Tell the matter to the church – withdraw my fellowship from him – and let him be as a heathen
- c. God placed responsibilities on both parties whenever there is a falling out
  - i. Man’s way is that only one has the responsibility but God says both parties

#### V. Examples of Forgiveness

- a. Many examples of forgiveness that will put us to shame
- b. Joseph and his brethren – (**Gen 50:17-21**) “So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.”
  - i. No brother has ever cast us into a pit and left you there to die
  - ii. No brother ever sold you into the bondage of a foreign country
    - 1. Made you to grow up separated from your family
  - iii. This is what Joseph’s brothers did to him – Joseph forgave them fully, freely, and without a grudge!
- c. David and Saul – (**1 Sam 24:17**) “And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.”
  - i. Saul was out to kill David
  - ii. David had him and could’ve killed him while he was sleeping, but rather David led Saul to repentance by his goodness!
- d. The example of Jesus Christ
  - i. (**Luke 23:34**) “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”
  - ii. Can not this be said of every brother that sows malice toward another – he knows not what he does – If he did he wouldn’t act so wickedly
  - iii. We need to have this type of attitude and spirit of forgiveness in order to lead the brother to repentance

#### VI. Conclusion

- a. What great and difficult thing forgiveness is!
- b. We can all learn to forgive those that sin against us when they repent – must use the word of God as our guide!
  - i. Responsibility is on both the offender and offended
- c. Example of God

- i. When you sin you sin against God – he is the offended and you are the offender
- ii. Offended:
  1. **(Rom 5:8)** “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
  2. God created a way of salvation for your sins
- iii. Offender:
  1. Repent and be obedient to His gospel
    - a. (Acts 2:38) “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
  2. Begin life anew – to serve God
    - a. (Rom 6:3-4) “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”