

As Christ Has Forgiven You

Introduction:

1. A gospel preacher Batsell Barrett Baxter was seated on an airplane next to a business executive and the 2 began talking...

- a. The Executive was BLIND, and Baxter couldn't help but ask what caused his blindness,
- b. The man said that a business competitor had hired a criminal to throw acid in his face.
- c. Baxter asked if he knew who it was—he said he thought so but couldn't prove it in court.
- d. Asked if he felt terrible resentment, he said "I did for years, but it dawned on me that I was doing myself the real injury. I forgave this man and I've actually done some favors for him in recent years."

(Wendell Winkler, Heart Disease and Their Cure p.7)

—**"Resentment is like drinking poison and hoping it will kill your enemies."** (Nelson Mandela)

2. Forgiveness brings up some uncomfortable questions...

- a. If I Forgive a Wrong—Am I Condoning That Wrong?
- b. If I Forgive Someone — Is That Like Saying it was OK? — or it never happened?
- c. If I Don't Forgive Them — Am I Keeping a Form of Justice—like Holding a Sword Over Them?

I. WHAT: Forgive One Another

A. FORGIVE ONE ANOTHER (Colossians 3:12-13)

1. WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

a) Forgiveness is Conveyed in Scriptures through several Greek & Hebrew words Which Are All Centered on God's Forgiveness Of Our Sins...

- (1) One Word Means **"to Blot Out"** that God erases or deletes the record of sins we commit
- (2) Another means: **"To Lift and Carry Away"** of the removal of the heavy load of guilt and shame of our sin
- (3) Another: **"To Cancel a Debt"** or **"to Release from a Debt"** meaning the punishment has been canceled by a Gift of Grace.

2. WHAT FORGIVENESS IS NOT...

As Christians we are called to Forgive One Another—but Forgiveness is...

- a) NOT Denying a Wrong or Glossing Over the Pain
- b) NOT Excusing Sinful Actions
- c) NOT Pretending it Never Happened — letting others continually sin against you
- d) NOT Pretending You Were Not Hurt

3. FORGIVENESS IS UNCOMFORTABLE—BUT IT IS POWERFUL

It has the Power to Change a Life for Eternity

There's Over 75 Word Pictures Found in Scripture of Forgiveness

- To Forgive is to turn the key, open the cell door and let the prisoner go free
- To Forgive is to loose the anchor and set the ship free to sail

- To Forgive is to give a full pardon to a condemned and sentenced criminal
- To Forgive is to loosen a stranglehold on an opponent
- To Forgive is to pound the gavel in a court room and declare 'Not Guilty'

—>**Without Forgiveness We're ALL Lost (Colossians 3:13)**

B. FORGIVENESS IS HARD—BUT SO IS RESENTMENT...

“The moment I start hating a man, I become his slave. He even controls my thoughts. I can't escape his tyrannical grasp on my mind. When the waiter serves me steak, it might as well be stale bread and water. The man I hate will not permit me to enjoy it.” (S. I. McMillan)

1. Resentment is a Full Time Slave Master Who Will NOT Let You Be Free...

“You only have to forgive once. To resent you have to do it all day, everyday, all the time. You have to keep remembering all the bad things—it's too much work.” —M.L. Stedman

C. RESENTMENT CAUSES PERSONALITY DISORDERS...

1. Psychologists have identified a new Personality Disorder...

a) Which is NOT new, but now recognized: TIV Tendency for Interpersonal Victimhood.

b) Would You Like to See if You Qualify?

On a Scale from 1-5, rate your agreement with the following statements...

- It is important to me that people who hurt me acknowledge that an injustice has been done to me.
- I think I am much more conscientious and moral in my relations with other people compared to their treatment of me.
- When people who are close to me feel hurt by my actions, it is very important for me to clarify that justice is on my side.
- It is very hard for me to stop thinking about the injustice others have done to me.

2. Scientific American reports if you scored high (4 or 5) on all these items, you may have what psychologists have identified as TIV

a) Tendency for Interpersonal Victimhood: “an ongoing feeling that the self is a victim, which is generalized across many kinds of relationships. As a result, victimization becomes a central part of the individual's identity.” (June 29, 2020)

b) Interpersonal victimhood consists of four main dimensions:

- (1) constantly seeking recognition for one's victimhood,
- (2) moral elitism,
- (3) lack of empathy for the pain and suffering of others, and
- (4) frequently ruminating about past victimization.

c) “The higher the participants Victimhood Quotient, the more they experienced negative emotions and felt entitled to behave immorally. The experience of negative emotions predicted behavioral revenge.”

3. The greatest Cyber Security Hacks into super secure encrypted systems is not through code—it's through a disgruntled employee: NSA, Wells Fargo, DNC

4. Satan Hacked Paradise by Creating Resentment ...

a disgruntled employee, and tempting her to take what was not hers to take

II. WHY Forgive One Another?

Forgiveness brings up serious questions—so Peter asks Jesus, how often do I forgive? Jesus tells a parable to answer the real question: WHY Forgive at all?

A. Because of the Magnitude of God's Forgiveness for You (18:21-27)

1. The Magnitude of sin: This Man is in Denial

- a) How Much is \$10,000 Talents?
- b) It Was Roughly Equal to the Tax Revenue to Rome of 5 Middle Eastern Provinces...
- c) At the Average Daily Wage of the Time—it would've taken 200,000 years to Pay Off!
- d) And in Today's Currency—worth about \$3 Billion Dollars!

2. The Magnitude of God's Mercy

- a) God has forgiven us a debt we could never have repaid

3. The Magnitude of the cost (Eph 1:7 > Mt 26:28)

B. Because of the Smallness of Your Brother's Sins Against You (18:28-30)

1. The Forgiven Servant Went Out and Choked a Man by the Throat

- a) The Man Cried Out for Patience—Just as He Just Cried Our for Patience
- b) The Amount He Owed was Insignificant... If the Currency had been in coins—
He could've Carried what he owed in one pocket.
- c) If the debt Forgiven the unmerciful servant had been in coins—
it would take an army of 8,600 men, each carrying a 60 lb sacks of coins
and walking 1 yard apart would be a line FIVE MILES LONG!

2. He Cast the Poor Man Into Prison—WHY?

- a) To appease His Own Guilty Conscience? To Feel Good About Himself?
- b) HE WAS FORGIVEN AN UN-PAYABLE DEBT!

C. Because of the Consequences of Refusing to Forgive (18:31-34)

1. The Others Witnessed His Unforgiving Spirit and were grieved

- a) Good People are Grieved by the Cruelty they see...
- b) The Way Husbands treat their wives or Wives treat their own husbands
- c) The Way Parents treat their children—Everyone can see it

2. The Servants Were Grieved but the King Was Wroth!

- a) God's Holy Nature Hates Sin in All it's Wicked Forms

3. The Full Penalty of His Sin Was Now Owed

- a) He Had Been Forgiven—But Refused to Forgive Others

4. We Forgive BECAUSE God Forgave Us...

and We Forgive So That God WILL Forgive Us (Mk 11:25)

**“To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable
because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you” —CS Lewis**

III. HOW to Forgive One Another

A. With a Spiritual and Eternal Perspective

1. Recognizing the Worth of One Soul... (Matthew 16:24–26)

a) Denying Self Means Denying Revenge—and Seeking Peace

- 1) **EXAMPLE:** There is a Husband & Wife in KY who had 1 son—Only 1 son...
- 2) But their Only Son was killed by a drunk driver. Every Yr. they Lobbied Court for max.
- 3) But 10 yrs later they're still bitter, so they went to see the young man,
- 4) They invited him dinner at their house... He sat in same seat as their son and cried...
- 5) They Forgave & taught him the gospel—Now He Sits Beside Them in Church Every Sunday

B. With a Conscious Choice Rather than a Feeling

1. Just as Agape Love is a Choice not a Feeling

2. A Conscious Choice to Choose what is best for them and you

3. The business man scarred and blinded by acid made a choice to forgive

C. With Forgiveness From the Heart (Matthew 18:35)

1. Forgiveness is a gift—Someone says: He doesn't deserve to be forgiven...

a) Of course he doesn't—no one "deserves" forgiveness.

2. Forgiveness isn't earned—its a gift of grace from the heart...

—that you give someone who hurt you

D. Without Animosity (Lk 15:22-24)

1. Noticed How the Father Forgave the Prodigal Son

a) He Received Him Back with Gladness

2. When Joseph revealed himself to his brothers—they were afraid...

a) Joseph had the Power and the Motive to Make Them Miserable

b) But he said don't be afraid. You meant it for evil, but God used it for good.

E. Without Keeping a Record (Matthew 18:21-22)

1. The Psalmist acknowledges this amazing fact! (Psalm 130:3–4 NIV)

a) Love Keeps No Record of Wrongs (1 Corinthians 13:4–5)

b) Which is How God Forgives Us (Hebrews 8:12)

2. WE CAN TELL IF WE'VE REALLY FORGIVEN SOMEONE—

—by Asking Ourselves a few questions...

- a) Do I Secretly Rejoice when I hear of some misfortune that falls on my offender?
- b) Do I intentionally avoid him/her?
- c) Do I talk with them only if I have to?
- d) Do I vividly Remember the wrong against me?
- e) Do I ever sit in silence and brood over the wrong done to me?
- f) Do I often find myself telling others how much this person hurt me?
- g) If a particular need arose—would I be happy to go to God in prayer for them?
- h) Have I looked for an opportunity to do him a favor?

F. With God's Help (Phil 4:13)

1. Our God is Faithful—Who Helps Us in Our Every Need...

- a) The God who placed 100 Billion Stars in our Galaxy and 100 Billion Galaxies in His Universe
- b) The God who created your brain with 100 Billion nerve cells,
- c) The God who is so Powerful He Shook the Earth and Darkened the Sun, Yet He can touch your conscience with the tenderness of a snowflake on shoulder.
- d) The God of Peace that knows every tear you shed and the reason for every tear.

2. He is Faithful & will not allow you to be tempted more than you can bear He will Help us in Time of Need

CONCLUSION:

1. We All Owed a Debt We Could Never Repay

- a) We Have All Sinned and Despised God Our Creator—
- b) We Have Accrued A Debt So Terrible it Cost the Very Best of Heaven—the Life of Jesus Christ!

2. Jesus Died as a Criminal on the Cross to Pay Our Debt in Full!

- a) A Debt We Could Never Have Repaid in a Million Lifetimes!
- b) A Debt He Paid So We Could Live Over a Million Lifetimes in Eternity!
- c) When God Forgives Us He Remembers Our Sins No More!

3. This is How Powerful Forgiveness Can Be!

- a) It has the Power to Change a Life for Eternity
- b) Forgiveness Offers a New Future—rather than the Pain of the Past

So How Many Times Should You Forgive?

As Many times as it will be necessary for God to Forgive you!

(Colossians 3:13–15)