

Forgiveness



"Nothing causes us to so nearly resemble God as the forgiveness of injuries."

CHRYSOSTOM



PRAY FIRST: O Father, I thank thee that in fullness of grace thou hast given me to Jesus, to be his sheep, jewel, portion; I Jesus I thank thee that in fullness of grace thou hast accepted, espoused, bound me; O Holy Spirit, I thank thee that in fullness of grace thou hast exhibited Jesus as my salvation, implanted faith within me, subdued my stubborn heart, made me one with him forever.

Understanding the Truth

Discussion:

- What does it mean to be forgiven?
- How can a believer experience forgiveness once he has failed?
- How should forgiveness affect our relationships with others?

What Is Forgiveness?

Forgiveness is the act of setting someone free from an obligation to you that is the result of a wrong done against you. When someone does something wrong to us, what are some obligations that we place on them to pay us back?

What Does It Mean to Be Forgiven?

- A. According to Psalm 51:4, whom did David say he wronged?
- B. According to Ezekiel 18:4, what is the penalty/obligation of everyone who sins against God?
- C. What did God do in order to set us free from this obligation? (*Read 2 Corinthians 5:21*)

How Can One Experience Forgiveness?

- A. What did Peter say is necessary to experience forgiveness? (*Read Acts 3:19*)
- B. What must we do to experience forgiveness in a practical way? (*Read 1 John 1:9*)
- C. What is God's promise?
 - To confess means to agree with or speak the same as God about it. Confession without a change of conduct simply makes you feel good, but confession with repentance brings the compassion and cleansing of God (*Proverbs 28:13*).

What Does God Do With Our Debts (Sins)?

Read the following verses and match the verse with the right answer:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| • Psalm 103:12 | Cast behind His back |
| • Isaiah 38:17 | Remembered no more |
| • Isaiah 43:25 | Cast into the depths of the sea |
| • Micah 7:19 | Removed as far as the East is from the West |

How Should Forgiveness Affect Our Relationships?

- A. According to Ephesians 4:32, why should we forgive others?
- B. According to Matthew 6:14-15, what is one consequence of not forgiving others?
- C. Read Matthew 18:21-35. Let's interpret this parable.
 - 1. Who is the king?
 - 2. Who is the slave?
 - 3. What does the debt (10,000 talents) represent?
 - 4. Who are the fellow slaves?
 - 5. Why did the king get so angry with the slave who refused to forgive his fellow slave?
 - 6. What is the message to us?

Discussion:

- Is this passage saying our relationship or fellowship with God is conditioned upon our forgiveness of others?

Forgiveness does not mean *forgetting*. Only God has the ability to forget (*Hebrews 10:17*). We are given memory so that we may *learn*. God doesn't need to remember anything because He knows everything (*Isaiah 40:28*). Just because you remember something someone has done to you does not mean you have not forgiven him or her. The key is your attitude towards that person and your expectation of him or her. Are you still obligating him or her to pay you back?

Embracing the Truth

Knitting the truth of God's Word into our lives



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1. Let's take a self-examination on forgiveness. Go through this list of people and ask yourself: Have any of these people hurt me? Am I expecting someone to pay me back for the hurt I'm feeling?
 - Your parents
 - Your spouse or ex-spouse
 - Your children
 - A co-worker
 - A friend or former friend
 - A fellow believer

2. Is it possible for you to make peace with this person? If so, as a believer you need to make the first move. *(Read Romans 12:18)*

3. According to Matthew 5:23-24, what does the Lord Jesus tell us to do before coming to worship?

Forgiveness is not easy, but it is essential. When there is unforgiveness in your life it will weigh you down and hinder your walk with Christ. If you have unforgiveness in your life stop right now and ask God to forgive you. Then make plans to go to the person that you have not forgiven and get it right. Here are some suggested steps:

1. Set up a time to talk with him or her personally and privately.
2. Express how you were hurt. Sometimes the other person has no idea.
3. Don't expect him or her to respond in any particular way whatsoever.
4. Let him or her know why you desire to get it right.
5. No matter what the response, give the debt to Christ and do not hold any obligation upon the person to repay you for a wrong done to you.

APPLICATION

Being a doer of the Word

1. What did I learn ("teaching")?
2. Where do I fall short ("reproof")?
3. What do I need to do about it ("correction")?
4. How can I make this a consistent part of my life ("training")?



ACCOUNTABILITY

Placing yourself in transparent and accountable relationships

How are you doing in the area of **INTEGRITY** and **CHARACTER**?

- Assess your battle against ungodly thoughts (unbelief, bitterness, resentment, lust, pride, self-righteousness, cynicism, jealousy, covetousness, racism, etc.):

(Unstable) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Stable)

- Have you been with a man or woman in the past week in a way that could be viewed as compromising? Yes/No
- Have you viewed sexually explicit material? Yes/No
- Have you had any financial dealings that failed to be filled with integrity? Yes/No

Obeying the Truth—your mission this week

Engaging the lost through word and deed with the intention of imparting the Gospel



- Reach out to a brother or sister with whom you have had differences and seek to convey your desire to be rightly related to them for Christ's sake.



MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK: Ephesians 4:32

"Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."



EXTRA RESOURCES FOR THE VAULT

Pink, A.W. "The Word of Forgiveness." Reformed Perspectives Magazine.

http://thirdmill.org/newfiles/aw_pink/aw_pink.forgiveness.html. Web. 15 July 2007.

Challies, Tim. "Never Sorry Enough". Challies.Com. <http://www.challies.com/articles/never-sorry-enough>. Web. 30 March 2015.

What Is Forgiveness?

apologize, feel guilty, repay, repair, promises, change of behavior, suffer, servanthood (answers may vary)

What Does it Mean to Be Forgiven?

- A. God
- B. death
- C. He made Christ to be sin on our behalf, He paid our debt

How Can One Experience Forgiveness?

- A. repent and return
- B. confess our sins
- C. He will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness

What Does God Do With Our Debts (sins)?

- Psalm 103:12 — Cast behind His back
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- Micah 7:19 — Removed as far as the East is from the West

How Should Forgiveness Affect Our Relationships?

- A. because God has forgiven us
- B. God will not forgive you
- C.
 1. Jesus Christ
 2. a believer
 3. sin, my unpayable debt
 4. other people, fellow believers

5. he was forgiven much but unwilling to forgive a little
6. forgive freely as Christ has forgiven us

Embracing the Truth

3. be reconciled to your brother

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible: 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.