

Forgiveness

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I. Incredible acts of forgiveness

Luk 23:34 Then said Jesus, **Father, forgive them**; for they know not what they do...

Act 7:60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, **Lord, lay not this sin to their charge**. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, **the forgiveness of sins**, according to the riches of his grace;

Psa 32:1 **Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven**, whose sin is covered.

Jer 31:34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for **they shall all know me**, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: **for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more**.

Dan 9:9 To the Lord our God *belong* mercies and **forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him**;

Mic 7:18 Who *is* a God like unto thee, that **pardoneth iniquity**, and **passeth by the transgression** of the remnant of his heritage? **he retaineth not his anger for ever**, because **he delighteth in mercy**.

Col 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, **having forgiven you all trespasses**;

Col 2:14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and **took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross**;

1Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, **he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins**, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

II. God's teachings on our proper attitude toward those who offend us

Mat 5:44 But I say unto you, **Love your enemies**, bless them that curse you, **do good to them that hate you**, and **pray for them which despitefully use you**, and persecute you;

Mat 5:45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven

Rom 12:14 **Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not**.

Rom 12:15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Rom 12:16 *Be* of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

Rom 12:17 **Recompense to no man evil for evil**. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

Rom 12:18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Rom 12:19 Dearly beloved, *avenge* not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, *Vengeance is mine*; I will repay, saith the Lord.

Rom 12:20 **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**.

Rom 12:21 **Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good**.

III. The two competing mindsets—A sense of self-greatness—A willingness to forgive

A. Most people have a natural high-minded feeling of self-greatness

Mat 18:1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, **Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?**

B. Jesus' show and tell concerning a 'little one'

Mat 18:2 And Jesus called a **little child** unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

1. You need to become this humble 'little one'

Mat 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as **little children**, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this **little child**, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

2. You need to receive these 'little ones'

Mat 18:5 And whoso shall receive one such **little child** in my name receiveth me.

3. Never do anything to offend (*entrap, trip up, entice to sin*) one of these ‘little ones’

Mat 18:6 But whoso shall offend one of these **little ones** which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Mat 18:7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

4. Remove from yourself whatever entices you to sin—(Including your ego)

Mat 18:8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

Mat 18:9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

5. Never despise a ‘little one’

Mat 18:10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these **little ones**; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

6. Seek—Find—Rejoice about restoring—Any ‘little one’ who has gone astray

Mat 18:11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

Mat 18:12 How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

Mat 18:13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

Mat 18:14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these **little ones** should perish.

C. From ‘little ones’ to ‘astray’ church brothers who have offended us

1. Jesus’ established the way to settle differences among brothers in the church

Mat 18:15 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.

Mat 18:16 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.

Mat 18:17 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.

2. Jesus gives the church authority to judge in these matters

Mat 18:18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

3. We can be assured that the Father and the Son support us in these matters

Mat 18:19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

Mat 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

D. How many times do I have to forgive?

Mat 18:21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

Mat 18:22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

E. Let those who are forgiven be forgivers

1. The servant who owed the king a debt that he could never pay off

Mat 18:23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

Mat 18:24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

Mat 18:25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

2. The king in his mercy forgave him the entire debt

Mat 18:26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

Mat 18:27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

3. This servant (who had been forgiven such a debt) refused to forgive another

Mat 18:28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

Mat 18:29 And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

Mat 18:30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

4. Other men saw how this forgiven man disgraced the whole idea of forgiveness

Mat 18:31 So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

5. At this point—The king demanded payment from the already forgiven man

Mat 18:32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

Mat 18:33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?

Mat 18:34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

6. This whole story is a picture of the forgiving God—And us when we don't forgive

Mat 18:35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye **from your hearts** forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

IV. In some ways—In the here and now—God's forgiveness hinges on our forgiveness

A. Jesus often connected God's forgiveness of us with our forgiving others

Mat 6:9 ...Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Mat 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

Mat 6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.

Mat 6:12 And **forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.**

Mat 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Mat 6:14 For **if ye forgive** men their trespasses, **your heavenly Father will also forgive you:**

B. Jesus also connected our non-forgiveness of others with God not forgiving us

Mat 6:15 But **if ye forgive not** men their trespasses, **neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**

Mar 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.

Mar 11:26 But **if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father** which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

C. God cannot deny His eternal forgiveness—Yet He now deals with wilful rebellion

Heb 10:26 For **if we sin wilfully** after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

Heb 10:27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Heb 10:28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

Heb 10:29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, **who hath trodden under foot the Son of God**, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath **done despite unto the Spirit of grace?**

Heb 10:30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

Heb 10:31 *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

V. Teachings about forgiveness on a practical level

A. Bitterness versus forgiveness—God's good advice—Forgive, as you were forgiven

Eph 4:31 **Let all bitterness**, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, **be put away** from you, with all malice:

Eph 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, **forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.**

B. Forgiveness and charity (sacrificial love) are the perfect bonds to relationships

Col 3:12 **Put on** therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, **bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;**

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.

Col 3:14 And above all these things **put on charity**, which is **the bond of perfectness.**

