

FORGIVENESS:
Will That Be One Goat Or Two?
Message 10
Date: /2011
Scripture: Leviticus 6:1-7

INTRO: Well, this is the last message on forgiveness. When I did the series on 'Wine And The Bible' I had no idea how big that subject would be and the opposition that would be raised to the view I took. When I started this subject, I had no idea that unconditional forgiveness would be so big and a view held by many more than I had thought. I suspected the impact this teaching had in bringing about the seeker friendly movement. I did not know that it would have fingers right into the NA movement or the new spirituality.

In the last message we looked at a number of mal-practices such as; letting time heal, forgive and forget, apologizing, forgiving ourselves or forgiving God. This morning I want to seek to answer a number of questions like, what about restitution? What if I sin against another in my thoughts? What if the one I offended or stole from has passed away? What if I think the repentance is not real? Is the one who forgives obligated to forget? And, how do we teach children to forgive?

And last, I want to add an appendix to these messages regarding the NA and unconditional forgiveness.

B. Questions

1. What about restitution? (188)

a. In material possessions

Our first question then is, what about restitution? Let me divide this into two parts. First, what if my wrong involved material possessions? For example, let us say I have stolen something from someone and then I repent. Is it sufficient to repent before the Lord? Is it sufficient to repent before the person from whom I stole? Or is something more required? Does it not seem wrong to have the person from whom I stole suffer the loss? Let me quote from John MacArthur here. He

writes, "Whenever an actual loss has been caused by a wrong, restitution is certainly appropriate. The granting of forgiveness for the guilt of the offense does not automatically nullify the need to make reparations, especially when the injured party's loss is quantifiable. Whether the loss was caused deliberately (as in a theft) or accidentally (through some form of negligence), restitution should be made."

Then he writes, "Under the Old Testament law, most restitution was as nearly as possible matched to the actual loss (Lev. 24:18-21). If your negligence caused your neighbor's ox to die, you had to pay him the value of the ox (Exod. 21:33-34). Deliberate thievery was punished with additional restitution. Someone who stole money had to repay an additional 20 percent (Lev. 6:4-5; Num. 5:6-7). Certain thefts of animals (especially if the stolen animals were killed) required four- and fivefold restitution (Exod. 22:1)."

As I view it, if one is not willing to make restitution in such matters, it is an evidence of the repentance not having gone deep enough yet.

However, in such matters there are very many things very hard to know how to do justice. For example, in the OT if you disfigured someone, say you cut off their finger, then you were to lose a finger as well. It was an eye for an eye. Today, in such cases, it would be wise to seek counsel from church leaders.

I might mention as well that it is within the right of the one who suffered loss to forego payment. In such a case the one who was wronged voluntarily takes the loss.

b. In non material possessions

But what about such things as lying? What about such things as slander? What about if such things have gone throughout the

community? You cannot place any monetary value on such things. What does one do in such a case. First off, the wrong needs to be confessed to the one who was lied about or slandered, or in whatever way the person was wronged. Let us say I lied about you to a group of people. Is it sufficient to go to you and repent before you? The general rule of thumb here is that the confession needs to be made as wide as the offense. If the lie was made publically, it needs to be confessed publically.

2. What if I sin in my thoughts against another?

Another question we might raise is what if I sin against another person in my thoughts? Again, a general rule would be to keep internal that which happened internally. This can be dealt with by repenting and confessing to God. I think it is generally best not to confess to the person about whom we have had bad thoughts. Repentance and confession are due to the one wronged only if it is an actual offense. If my thoughts have not become actions, then I need to confess to God and repent to Him. Generally more harm than good is done by confessing to the person. For example, it would not be good to confess lustful thoughts to another person. Also, the problem is one of your own heart and at this point affects you and your relationship to God. Deal with it there and overcome there, and all is well.

3. What if I think the repentance is not real?

A third question we might raise is what if I think the repentance is not real? For this, we go to Luke 17 (read 2-4). Now if somebody did the same thing over seven times in a day, we would likely say this repentance is not real. But Jesus said, "And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."

Now you can set up all kinds of hypothetical cases and say, "What if..." My recommendation is to not try to set up hypothetical cases in your

mind. Many of these things never become real cases. But if it does, and you do not know what to do, take your case for counsel from godly Christians and then decide. Until then, forgive when the person says, "I repent".

4. What if the one I offended or stole from has passed away?

In many of these kinds of cases we might find OT laws that will give us principals on how to handle such cases. For this one, let us go to Numbers 5 (read 5-9). Verse 8 says, "But if the man has no kinsman..." What is in view is that the wronged person has passed away. If it is a matter of property or money etc... if the original owner had passed away, restitution was to be made to close relatives. If there were no close relatives, it was to be made to the Lord.

It could be that a person has slandered or lied about another and the one wronged has passed away. What about in such cases? I think the same principals can be applied to this as well. Confession could be made to a close relative and if there are none, then to a pastor. I always tell people I do not want to know your sins. If you can deal with this matter without me knowing, that is what I prefer. But if you need to tell me in order for me to help you, then you can tell me. Sometimes this is seemingly the only way to come free.

5. Is the one who forgives obligated to forget?

A fifth question we might ask is, is the one who forgives obligated to forget? I might say, all animosity must be gone, or we have not truly forgiven. But with regard to forgetting, we have talked about that in a previous message. When you forgive someone, the goat that bore the sin into the wilderness must never return. In most cases when repentance takes place, leaving this matter behind is quite easy. When it is not easy, then present tense forgetting is necessary. That is, when it comes to mind you say, "No, I will not dwell on this thing."

Sometimes, if you can talk about such a case later without causing any offense to the one with whom you have had the issue, and you can help others with it, then I think it is OK to mention it. But it must be harmless to the one with whom we had the issue as well.

6. How do we teach children to forgive

I would say here first of all, the most important thing parents can do is take care of things right themselves when they have done wrong. Let us say you got angry in the presence of your children or did something that needs to be repented of in front of your child, now the key thing is to take care of it in front of them, or at least let them know how you have taken care of it. Maybe you have disciplined your child out of anger, and later you regret this action and realize you were wrong. There is a major opportunity to teach how to do it right. Go to your child and confess. That is say, "I disciplined you in anger..." or "I disciplined you and I did not have the information right, and I was wrong to do that and I am asking you to forgive me."

Deuteronomy 6 talks about parents or particularly the dad to teach his children. Turn with me to Deuteronomy 6 (read 6-9). Most of the training of children takes place in every day life situations. So you do it when you sit in your house, or when you are walking by the way, or when you lie down or when you rise up. Teaching the Word of God is to have a priority place with dads. Special devotional times are good, but teaching in life situations in informal ways is as powerful as anything can be. One of the key ways of teaching repentance, confession and forgiveness is in real life situations.

Let me give an example. Many of us as Dads have trouble controlling our temper. Incredible damage is done by a dad with an uncontrolled temper. So, let us say we have become angry at our wife in front of our children. When we cool down, then we need to repent to our wife in front of our

children. You will not teach a more powerful lesson on forgiveness than this. But, let us say you got angry with your child. If it was in the presence of others, repent in the presence of those whenever possible. If it was individually, repent individually. No instructions you give your children will be more powerful lessons on repenting and forgiving to your children than this.

But you need to know how to handle specific situations when the child does wrong. I do not view myself as an authority child rearing or on teaching children in general. But, if I were to go back and do it over again, I think I would do some things a little differently. Many times I wish I would have known more when my family was younger. But, what we did when our children were young was to have them say they were sorry, but they needed to name the thing they were sorry for. So, if one had hit the other, they did not only say, "I'm sorry." They had to say, "I'm sorry for hitting you." I think our children disliked that last part the most.

If I were to go back, I think I would do things a little differently. First, if a spanking is due, then that needs to be done. We did that. But then I think I would say, "Now, I want you to go sit down over there and think over what you did. And when you agree that what you did was wrong, then when you are ready to say, 'It was wrong of me to hit you. Would you forgive me?'" , then come tell me and we'll go take care of this with your brother or sister.

But let us say something happens accidentally and they feel badly about it, then it is appropriate to say, "I'm sorry." Then, if they are sorry, see to it that they take care of it by saying so. But if they are not sorry, then a spanking or having to sit in a corner until they begin to change their mind may be in place. Then make sure it is cleared up before they can go play again.

But when they have done something accidentally and then become angry and punched their brother

or sister, now a little more than saying 'I'm sorry' is necessary. And making them say, "I'm sorry for causing you to spill your strawberries" may not be the truth at that time. To have them say they are sorry may be causing them to lie. So you might have to spank or have them sit and cool down somewhere and think it over until they are sorry. Now they need to apologize for the accident and then repent over hitting. x

But if a child ruined his brother's bicycle or such like, then it may even be necessary to have some form of paying back. If a child does not learn at a young age that it is costly to damage other people's property it may take a situation outside of the parent's control to teach that lesson, like being charged by the police. And right here, let me encourage parents to teach their children to respect the property of others. If you can take the course, "Growing Kids God's Way" though I do not care for the title, it is a very helpful course.

VIII. APPENDIX - The New Age Problem

I now want to do something I have never done before. I am going to add an appendix to these messages. This is an addition that I had not foreseen when I began. Some years ago, when I did the 'Wine and The Bible' series, I had no idea what a huge and unpopular subject I had taken on. I did not know the extent of animosity it would create. I believe I touched a very productive area for the devil and he put in every effort to resist it. That may be true again in this series.

What I want to add at this point is something that I was alerted to by one of our speakers on the prophecy conference. It is this, the NA or the New Spirituality is full of talk about unconditional love and unconditional forgiveness. We were alerted in these messages about A Course In Miracles. I have done a little research on A Course in Miracles and other NA material and I was amazed at the important role that unconditional forgiveness and unconditional love play in this movement.

Throughout my time of studying the subject of forgiveness I began to question if it was not the teaching of the Christian Church over the last 100 years or so that has actually contributed to or brought about the seeker friendly approach to doing church and possibly also the emerging church movement. Two common phrases in our day alerted me to that possibility. They are unconditional forgiveness and unconditional love.

In the mid or later 1800's, the 'boy preacher' came to D.L. Moody's church. With reluctance he was allowed to preach in Mr. Moody's church. Mr. Moody was not there the first night and when he was back he asked how it was going with the 'boy preacher'. Well, to Moody's surprise, when he came back and enquired about the 'young Englishman' His wife told him that the people liked him 'very much'. So he asked, "Well, do you like him?" And she said, "Yes, I liked him very much. He has preached two sermons from that verse of John, 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life," and I think you will like him, although he preaches a little differently from you." So Moody said to his wife, "How is that?" "Well, she said, "he tells the worst sinners that God loves them." And this is what Moody later said he had said to that, "'Then' said I, 'he is wrong.'"

But Mr. Moody too, loved the preaching of this boy preacher and his view of God and God's love changed. From that day to our day, such a drastic change has occurred in the message of the church that if one brings into question the common phrase 'unconditional love' one's Christian orthodoxy becomes questionable.

Today we have another very common phrase. It is that of unconditional forgiveness. Though we do not use that phrase so much as Christians, we teach it virtually all the time. Almost every Christian endorses that view. But that is not only true of the Christian, it is a huge teaching in the NA movement. We have been familiarized with the NA teaching of A Course in Miracles. Let me read to you from their page on internet.

Welcome!
"To teach is to demonstrate"
A Course In Miracles (ACIM)
By Jesus Christ

Come visit us and join us in daily ACIM inspired mind
Training and community living at the
Living Miracles Monastery
near Fruitland, Utah

Above and below this is a picture of Jesus. Then what is written below goes like this:

You have come upon a foundation dedicated to nothing less than ... Enlightenment/Salvation through forgiveness of illusion: Constant Peace, Happiness, Joy, and Freedom! We are dedicated to demonstrating complete forgiveness as described in *A Course In Miracles (ACIM)*, unlearning error, experiencing the Present Moment, and remembering the Eternal Love of God. You are encouraged to share the experience of the Love within your heart freely. Salvation is a Free Gift and so are all the ideas available to use in accepting It. Please [join](#) our large global mailing list called Awakening In Christ for inspirational messages and information about gatherings.

All Glory to God and thanks be to Jesus and the Holy Spirit for Answering the prayers of everyone.

In another internet article called, "The Power of Unconditional Forgiveness" by Greg Mackie, this kind of forgiveness is touted as the key to success. Here is what he writes:

I recently saw a great question posed on the religious dialogue website [On Faith](#): "How can we forgive our enemies? Should we, even if they have committed atrocities?" Well-known religious writer John Shelby Spong gives what I think is an amazing answer, especially in a world where forgiveness is usually tied to the requirement of repentance or apology on the part of the wrongdoer: "Desmond Tutu's great insight was that there are no conditions on forgiveness. The 'even if' part of this question means that the questioner is not talking about forgiveness." He goes on to describe how the power of unconditional forgiveness-the kind of forgiveness A *Course in Miracles* teaches-transformed the entire nation of South Africa in a way that can only be described as miraculous.

What is noteworthy in this article is how the writer understands unconditional forgiveness. The question posed is, "How can we forgive our enemies? Should we, even if they have committed atrocities?" Here is how he answers, "Well known religious writer John Shelby Spong gives what I think is an amazing answer, especially in a world where forgiveness is usually tied to the requirement of repentance or apology on the part of the wrongdoer", end quote. So what is Spong's amazing answer about forgiveness in a world where repentance is required? Well, first, that is a miss-statement. Very seldom is repentance required by either Christian or non-

Christian. That would be speaking of a very small minority. But Spong's answer is, and I quote, "Desmond Tutu's great insight was that there are no conditions on forgiveness. The 'even if part of this question means that the questioner is not talking about forgiveness", end quote. The writer then shares that the kind of forgiveness needed is the kind taught in *A Course in Miracles*.

The writer then shares how amnesty was granted in South Africa. He writes, "Now, the granting of amnesty was not unconditional; in fact, most people who applied for amnesty did not get it. But the process was permeated by the spirit of forgiveness exemplified by Tutu, who wrote...that contrition on the part of the wrongdoer is not necessary to forgive. After all, if the victim had to wait for the perpetrator's repentance in order to forgive, "the victim would be locked into the culprit's whim, locked into victimhood, whatever her own attitude or intention" (p. 220). True forgiveness cannot be dependent on the perpetrator's confession or apology; it is an unconditional gift that frees our own minds from the prison of hatred. Thus, as Jesus did with his crucifiers, we need to forgive even those who "know not what they are doing."

The article then goes on like this in a different colored print, "Forgiveness creates a power that expands the desire to build a new world. It produces an enlightened consciousness. Desmond Tutu understood this, called his nation to act on it and in the process transformed South Africa. Would that national leaders everywhere could do the same." The print then goes to normal black print again like this, "Would that we *all* could do the same. Fortunately, we have in our hands *A Course in Miracles*, a path of truth and reconciliation that unleashes the power of unconditional forgiveness in all of us, a power that can and will transform the world."

Now I am told that a key phrase throughout *A Course In Miracles* is, "Forgiveness is the key to happiness." If you want to check some of this out, go to YouTube and look up Gerald Jampolski and Diane Cirincioni on forgiveness. It is frightening what the New Age or New Spirituality is doing with unconditional forgiveness. And of course, they do not deal with repentance at all because there is no such a thing as sin.

And so, in conclusion to this point, let me just mention that what is the same in the New Age teaching on unconditional forgiveness and the unconditional forgiveness taught in most churches is that forgiveness can be granted without repentance. Furthermore, this forgiveness is for the spiritual

health of the one who forgives. The offender is not rebuked as the Bible says. Forgiveness is not conditioned on repentance as the Bible says.

CONCL: Well, this series is done. Where have we been? Well, we have looked at the divine problem of sin and God's plan. We have looked at the two major positions, conditional verses unconditional forgiveness. We looked at the divine picture in the OT of forgiveness as shown in the day of atonement and then looked at it from a NT parable. We then considered the series premise; repentance must take place before true forgiveness can be extended. We considered the seven relational points in the matter of forgiveness: relationship, sin, separation, repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation. I gave you what I believe are mal-practices with regard to our subject such as unconditional forgiveness, letting time heal, forgive and forget, saying "I'm sorry", forgiving ourselves or forgiving God. And then this morning we sought to answer these questions: What about restitution? What if I sin in my thoughts against another? What if I think repentance was not real? What if the one I offended or stole from has passed away? Is the one who forgives obligated to forget? How do we teach children to forgive?

And then last, I briefly introduced you to the NA ling to unconditional forgiveness. This will bear watching in the future.

If you are interested, there are several copies of the overall outline of this series on the CD table at the back. For online viewers, you can find this at the end of message 10 in the PDF file.

WILL THAT BE ONE GOAT OR TWO?

Forgiveness with God, will that be one goat or two?
That will be two, as you see, just one will not do.
Sin must be paid for, O yes that is true,
But repentance before God, must take place too.

One goat must die for our justification,
But to bear away our every transgression,
The other must receive our sincere confession.
Only thus can these two goats bring true satisfaction.

Forgiveness with man, will that be one goat or two?
That will be two, as you see, just one will not do.
Christ paid for our sins, O yes that is true;
But repentance before man, must take place too.

One goat paid the price, for sins against man;
But to be forgiven, we must understand:
We must say, "I've sinned," and in repentance must bend;
Into the wilderness, the second goat to send.

FORGIVENESS:
Will That Be One Goat Or Two?
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VIII. APPENDIX - The New Age Problem

CONCL: