

Forgiveness Includes Another



#2864 0726 20P
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Forgiveness includes forgiving—others! The Lord’s Prayer says Matthew 6:12 “And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;” adding—Matthew 6:14 “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Forgiveness includes another decision on our part.

We say: I forgive that person, and often leave it at that—making no effort to be reconciled with them, or making any attempt to make things right with them. Matthew 5:23 “Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

We cannot pray in confidence and expect God to answer the prayer, if we are unwilling to make things right with a fellow believer first. Many times that person who offended us is right next to us, but we are unwilling to speak to them, or to reconcile with them. Knowing how to truly forgive someone who has harmed us or mistreated a loved one—is an important issue.

The apostle persecuted and imprisoned those who *believed* in Jesus—serious sins; but when God intervened in his life to save his soul, he was willing to repent. The apostle said Acts 9:6 “*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.*” God *knew* he had a willing and repentant heart.

We must make things *right* with those who hurt us—it is the *only* way to be a *right example* of a Christ-like attitude of forgiveness. It is amazing what God can *do* for those with a willing heart. Back in that day, we would never have *thought* that Paul would become an *apostle* of Jesus—but God’s grace reached further than the apostle’s worst mistakes.

Jesus knew that Judas Iscariot would *betray* Him, but He *still* had supper with him. He didn’t rebuke him or send him out of their fellowship, but said: John 13:27 “*Whatever you are going to do, do quickly*”. Simon Peter denied Jesus three times, but after showing *remorse* and a *repentant* spirit, he is *forgiven* and *accepted back* into their fellowship as a beloved brother in Christ.

God knew from the beginning that we would all *sin*, make serious *mistakes*, and hold *resentment* against others, so He sent His Son to the Cross, to atone for those transgressions. He now asks us to come *back* to Him and be willing to *forgive* anyone—of any possible wrong.

This remarkable work of Atonement Jesus did for us on the Cross, is beyond human comprehension—when we consider how much sorrow, sadness, depression, fear, and evil there *is* in the world. By taking *our* place on the Cross, and shedding His *Blood* for our sins, all of those terrible mistakes of the past are erased and forgiven—we just *repent* and *return* to Him.

The devil has ensnared so many *people* in so many *sins* and for so many *years*, it seems that the entire world does *opposite* to what they should

do; they are *opposite* to what they should *be*; and they live *opposite* to the way God wants them to live. No one, it seems today, wants to *believe* God and to *trust* Him in faith.

The enormous number of illnesses; diseases; infections; and viruses in the world shows what *power* the devil *has* over people—but that power was *destroyed* and *taken from* him by the shedding of Blood on Calvary’s Cross. 1 John 3:8 “*For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*” We just have to *believe* that and then *trust* God in faith.

Our many sins and mistakes are *forgiven* by God’s grace. Romans 5:15 “*For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.*” God’s *grace* could forgive *millions*, if they would *believe* it, *accept* it, and be willing to *forgive* others.

All too often we offend people, hurt others, and disobey God’s Word—intentionally and sometimes unintentionally, but *forgiveness* is available if we will *admit* that, come to God in *repentance*, and *confess* those sins to Him. We need a perfect sacrifice to change our heart. We often ignore people who hurt us and we hold grudges against them—sometimes for *years*, but God is willing and waiting to *forgive* us, when we *admit* our mistakes and *confess* them to Him.

Forgiveness is believing the Word of the Lord. The man lowered in front of Jesus, did not *know* that his sins were forgiven, by “*The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*” Revelation 13:8. Jesus told him Matthew 9:2 “*Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.*” The *crowd* did not believe it, but the *man* believed it and *accepted* the forgiveness of the Lord.

No matter how oppressed we are, or how afflicted we feel, Jesus *paid* for our healing. Isaiah 53:4 “*Surely our sicknesses He hath borne, And our pains—He hath carried them.*” We

can be *free* from resentment and wrong attitudes; we can be *delivered* from sickness and pain—all by the Atonement work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

The man was told that he was *forgiven* and *free* from past sins—Matthew 9:6 “*Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.*” The man *believed* the words, *accepted* the grace, and *acted* in faith. That forgiveness of sin was in place from the beginning—Jesus saying John 8:58 “*Before Abraham was, I AM.*” The man *accepted* the Words; *believed* in his heart that he was delivered, so Matthew 9:7 “*He arose, and departed to his house.*”

Preparation for eternal life includes a willingness in our heart to *believe* we are forgiven, and *our* forgiving others is included. Spiritual progress will not be made until we are ready to *believe* that Jesus died on the cross to *forgive* the sins in our life—how could we *possibly* withhold forgiveness from anyone!

We have to *admit* our wrong attitudes and *confess* them to God—who is “*Faithful and just to forgive us*” 1 John 1:9. If He did *not* forgive our sins when we confess them to Him, He would be *unfaithful* to His promise—which is *not* possible. The shed Blood of Christ *removes* our sins and *pays* for our freedom—we are Romans 6:11 “*Dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*”

Before God created the world, the sacrifice of Atonement was already in place. Israel’s history is about God *teaching* His people of the seriousness of sin, and of His *plan* of atonement for those sins. Millions of animal *sacrifices* over many *centuries*, show the seriousness of sin, and the *price* for the atonement of them.

The devil will try to persuade us that God’s Word is *not* true; that we are *not* free from sin; that we are *not* forgiven and that we are *not* obligated to forgive others. He will say that we will *not* receive what God has promised us.

No matter *how* the devil tries to discourage us, or *how* he tries to talk us out of God’s promises, we must reject those thoughts. Every doubt, fear, and discouragement is from the devil—so we discard them.

The devil of *no* truth is telling us one thing—and the God of *all* Truth is telling us the opposite. We must always believe God’s *Word of truth*, no matter what lie Satan has presented. All *doubt* is from the devil, and only if we *accept* his lie and *act* on it, can our prayers be hindered. We are to *believe*—not to *force* God to answer our prayer—but to give evidence that we *know* God *wants* us to have them.

Before offering our next prayer, we should ask God to *reveal* any wrong attitude in our heart, and that He check the *sincerity* of our confession with the *plumb-line* of His Word. Any *willful sin*, *unforgiving spirit*, or *rebellious attitude* in our heart, must be dealt with by *confessing*, *repenting*, and *forsaking* them. The Holy Spirit inspires faith in us to *confess*, *repent*, and *forsake* sins.

It is actually surprising how much *resentment* we can hold on to for *years*; and how long we can retain *hard feelings* in our heart against someone; or to hold serious *grudges* for years and years—and just let it go—never dealing with it. Even with all that rebellion toward God, Jesus is willing to *forgive* us the moment we *ask* Him—and that always includes our willingness to forgive others. Matthew 6:14 “*For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*”

Our prayer to God is that He show *how* to *forgive* others—like He *wants* us to forgive. The women caught in a serious sin, is a good example of how willing Jesus is to *forgive*. All of us have sinned—sometimes *known* to others and sometimes *hidden* for years.

When we hear of the faults, mistakes, and misdeeds of someone, the question to ask ourselves is, Are we like the scribes and Pharisees—picking up stones to throw; thinking they deserve it! Or are we willing to *forgive* them as *Jesus* was willing to *forgive* us! He said to the unwilling John 8:7 “*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.*” No one was without sin, so all dropped the stones and left.

When Jesus asked her John 8:10 “*Hath no man condemned thee? 11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.*” Why cannot we say that—*Who am I to condemn anyone; Jesus forgave me, and He says I have to do the same.*

Asking forgiveness from God, includes another—another *decision* on *our* part to forgive *all* who have ever sinned against us or a loved one. May God help us learn *how* to forgive others, as *Jesus* forgave us—of which we *all fit* into that category. May God help us to receive *His forgiveness* and be truly willing to *forgive others* in the same way—no matter how often or how seriously we’ve been hurt.

Jesus said John 8:12 “*I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*” Having that spiritual *light of life*, is the only pathway to *eternal life*—but that *light of life* includes a *forgiving spirit* toward everyone—concerning everything! The end result is so worth it, because, Matthew 6:14 “*Your heavenly Father will also forgive you.*”



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