

**SUBJECT : RECEIVING AND GIVING
FORGIVENESS**

BIBLE BASIS: Lesson Scripture:
Matthew 18:21-35

BIBLE TRUTH:
Having a forgiving heart.

MEMORY VERSE: READ Matt. 18:27

LESSON AIM:
That you will be a forgiving servant



Introduction

- The truth of the matter is people choose not to forgive, not because they enjoy not forgiving, but they fine themselves helpless to let go or release those that hurt them in the past. They try to forgive but they can't. Every time the devil reminds them of the incident, they are overwhelmed with the hurt all over again. **So, the question is, what can we do about it?**
- 2 Corn 6:1 We then as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. How can a believer receive the grace of God in vain?
- The biggest weapon the devil has to use against the saints is **sin**. The biggest weapon the saints have against the devil is **grace**. That is why Paul is making a stern directive, not to take the grace of God in vain.
- What does that mean? The devil cannot stop God from giving you grace. If God chooses to extend grace to you, the devil can do nothing about it.
- The devil can't stop you from receiving that grace. So, you see, the devil is stopped at both ends. He cannot stop God from giving you grace and he can't stop you from receiving it.

Who Is Stopping You From Forgiving?

- But, once you receive grace, the devil can stop you from applying it to your situation, by lying to you and convincing you that forgiveness is not a gift and can only be given when the offender repents or apologies.
- Now the Lord already gave us the grace to forgive. But we don't believe that grace was given to us for that particular work. Because when God gave us the grace, the devil immediately lie to us and said, until the person that hurt us so badly repents, there is nothing we can do about it.
- **And now we have double jeopardy.** First we are hurt by the person who injured us, now the pain caused by that person continues to hurt us everyday because we refuse to forgive. And so we already have the grace within ourselves to deal with that sin, but we don't know how to apply it. So we receive that grace in vain.
- Say you are dying of pneumonia and you just have a few days to live if you don't get medical attention. A doctor show up with the right antibiotic to cure you of the deadly condition. You receive it, however, you set the medication on the bedside table and never take it. So 2 days later your dead. Why? Because you received it in vain, because you failed to take it.

Its A Trick Of The Devil

- This is what the devil uses all the time. Someone hurts you real bad. The devil tells you, there is nothing you can do about it until that person repents. And by lying to us, he enslaves us a second time, because hurts that go unresolved, have the ability to go non-stop, constant replay, no matter how long ago it happened, it keeps hurting you over and over again.
- So the devil will always have someone close to us hurt us. Because a stranger can't hurt us as bad as a friend. Zechariah 13:6
- Let me give you an example: if I'm walking down the street and someone in a passing car calls me stupid. I'm not going to lose any sleep over it. But if my wife calls me stupid. It hurt real bad. Same word different consequence.
- Why? Because I love my wife, she's the closest person to me in this world. The closer the person is, the greater damage they can inflict on you. That is why the devil has been busy, causing people that are close to you to hurt you, so he can enslave you to your past. And know matter when the incident occurred last month, last year, 5 years ago, 10 years ago, 20 years ago, if it is unresolved, it just keeps on hurting you over and over again.

How To Be Released From My Pass?

- So how do we deal with unresolved issues of the past? 2Corn 5:17
- Let me ask you a question. Has anybody ever hurt you in your past?
- Well, is the fact that you remembered so quickly, because it just happened this morning? No, actually it didn't happen this morning, nor did it happen yesterday, not even last week, it happened a long time ago. This is why it is very important to deal with the issue of old things.
- So, the Bible say, when you are in Christ the **old things are passed away, behold all things are become new**. Now, let me ask you a second question. At what point in your life did the new things begin?
- If we answer, at the **moment of conversion** we face a monumental problem with your past. Chances are you received the grace of God in vain. Why is that? Because if new things started at the point of conversion on, you have a monumental problem with all the old things that happened in your life in the past. And you find yourself in a spirit of spiritual schizophrenia, where in one hand you are holding the bag of all the **new things** that Jesus did and you show them to everybody. And in the other hand you hold all the **old things** and failures of your past that you don't want anybody to see.

Let's Deal With The Shadow Of The Past

- And you say to yourself, I wish I could have known Christ sooner, because I met him when I was 25 and since then my life have been wonderful. But all the way up until that moment I had messed my life up so bad.
- Now the new things live in the shadow of the old things, and I cannot enjoy the new things like I should. Why? Because I didn't see where God had dealt with my past. But if you believe that new things began from the moment of conversion on, what you are saying, God did not save the totality of your life. But only that part of your life at the moment of conversion on, and that is not true. God didn't save part of your life, he saved the totality of your life. God saved your life all the way back to the moment of conception. Why conception? because that is when the old things began. Heb 7:25
- This is what happened at the moment of conversion, the grace of God enters your life and makes a right turn and traveled all the way back to the moment of conception touching every evil thing in your life and turning it into a good thing. Gen. 50:20

Conclusion

- How do I know that? Let me ask you a question, one second before conversion what percentage of things are old in your life? _____% right. One second after conversion, what percent of things are new in your life? _____%. Where did the new things come from?
- This is the good news..... So, I declare to you today, that every evil thing that the devil brought into your life, God said, he will turn it into a blessing. The only thing the devil can do with evil in your life and my life is create an inventory of raw material for God to turn them into trophies of his grace. Every thing the devil intended for evil God has turn it to good. Gen. 50:20
- Isa 1:18 Come now let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, thou they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.
- No weapon formed against you shall prosper. Isa. 54:17

The Spirit And Practice Of Forgiveness

- **Matthew 18:21-22.** Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? [22] Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, **Until seventy times seven.**
- Peter had heard Jesus teach on the principle of forgiveness on the Sermon on the Mt. Matt. 6:15. As Peter hears Jesus teach on forgiveness again Matt. 18:15-17, He thinks a little deeper about the idea of forgiveness and articulate a question; Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Peter answers his own question, seven times. What Peter was really asking Jesus, is their a limit to this principle of forgiveness?
- Peter was very generous in allowing seven times as a limit. This could have come from Peters scripture knowledge. Deut. 28:25, Ps. 79:12, Pro. 24:16
- To limit forgiveness is like keeping track on the number of times you are offended and forgive. Then after seven offenses turn off compassion and turn on revenge. Jesus answered that forgiveness is unlimited. Luke 17:4 insincere, Rom 12:19 vengence

Let's Do The Math

- [23] Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. [24] And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. [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.
- Jesus illustrated that forgiveness is a kingdom principle.
- Like the servant in the illustration we must all give account of our lives to God. 2Corn. 5:10, Rom. 14:10, Ps. 19:12; 40:12.
- The point is that God has given us life and made us overseer of that life. To sin is to mismanage that life and to cause loss; therefore, sin puts us in debt to God. Rom. 6:23
- The amount owed is ten-thousand talents (1talent = 600 denarii) which is the equivalent of a days wages, which is beyond anything he can ever pay. We are so bankrupt by sin that nothing can pay our debt. Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Heb. 9:22, Col. 1:14

The Spirit Of Unforgiveness

- [26] The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. [27] Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.[28] But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.
- The servant asked for more time, but would time solve his problem? No. He really needed mercy. When people make promises many time they can't keep, how should you deal with them?
- Now the story takes a startling twist. What kind of master would forgive this kind of debt and ask nothing in return. The debt is cancelled the invoice stamped paid in full, the man is set free. Now that sounds like good news. John 8:36, Rom 8:1-2
- In comparison, the debt owed the forgiven servant was very small. It was a hundred pence = 100 denarii (100 work days owed to the forgiven servant. When we really see this, an unforgiving spirit toward a brother is inexcusable.
- He attacked the debtor. He exercised his authority over the debtor and attempted to squeeze the payment out of him.

Can We Hear The Cry Of Mercy?

- [29] And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. [30] And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.
- He rejected the cry for mercy and refused to forgive.
- He acted selfishly and worldly, according to law and justice. The man really owed the servant. The debt was a just and legal debt. The servant had every right to demand and force payment. Such was justice, but again, remember the point Christ was making. The King, God, does not act toward us legally, executing justice. He has mercy upon us and forgives us, wiping out all our debts. Ps. 103:10
- The question is, how often should we forgive our brother? “Seventy times seven,” Christ said. “Have compassion and mercy; don’t demand justice. Don’t execute the law against a man. Don’t act cruelly, swallowing him up and destroying his spirit. Love him and forgive him ‘even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you’ ” Eph. 4:32, 1Corn. 6:1-3

God Don't Like Ugly

- [31] So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. [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: [33] Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?
- The fellow servants were grieved to see people mistreated, abused, and trampled upon. Are you a snitch if you stand up for others that are being mistreated and abuses? Or is standing up for righteousness a kingdom principle to be followed? Ps. 82:3, Prov. 31:9
- Very simply put, a wicked man is a man who does not honestly believe God nor diligently seek to live as God lives. Heb. 11:6. He is a man who does not believe that God is, does not believe to the point that it changes his life. His life is not compassionate, merciful, and forgiving. Because of this he shall face the judgment of the King and be condemned. Matt. 7:2
- “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” (Romans 2:4).

Conclusion

- [34] And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. [35] So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.
- The man that doesn't show mercy shall experience justice. Note two critical things about the justice executed. The unmerciful servant received perfect justice.
- The King was perfectly just. He executed what the servant himself had chosen: due payment for due debt.
- The point is clear and critical. It is critical because it determines our eternal destiny. We must not only forgive, we must live a life of forgiveness and mercy. If we do not forgive *from our hearts*, neither will God forgive us. Note three things.
- Forgiveness comes from the heart of our new nature. 2Corn 5:17
- Christ says "My Father," *not* "your Father." God was not the servant's Father. The servant was not a genuine follower of Christ.
- The person who does not forgive others does not know the forgiveness of God. Having a spirit of forgiveness is so important that Christ taught it time and again.

It's All Good

• Every evil thing the devil did in your life whether you did it willfully or somebody did it to you or you had a portion of guilt in it, God will use it for good. So the moment the grace of God enters your life, it travels all the way back to the moment of conception turning every evil thing into a good thing. When the grace of God entered your life that grace was intended to forgive you of your sins and the sins of everybody that touch you with evil. Is that biblical?

• Are you saying, the day God forgave me he also forgave all those that hurt me? That exactly right. (In Christ)

• Well, I don't think that is biblical, how can God forgive without people repenting? Well. How many people repented at he cross? Maybe one, how many got forgiven? All... Luke 23:34

• The grace of God is immediately given to the injured party, the moment the injury takes place, for that person to be able to forgive unilateral so that person is not a victim of double jeopardy.



The Big Mistake

- The biggest mistake the devil ever made is when he put some nails in the hands of a carpenter son. He's been building God's kingdom every since.
- Sin is corporate in its consequences; if grace is God's remedy for sin, then grace must be corporate in its benefits, or it's not a good remedy.
- Let me illustrate: God forbid, but if I ever commit adultery, I am guilty my wife isn't, is my wife affected? Will my children be affected? Will this ministry be affected? How come if only I sinned, because that is the nature of sin, it's corporate in its consequence. Now the good news; for grace to be the right remedy for sin, it has to be corporate in its benefits. So that when I repent and I apply grace all the people who I injured through my adultery then the process begins to heal everybody involved.
- Brother Michael tell me how can I apply this grace to my dark past?
- Grace is not Jell-O, grace is not without substance, grace is tougher than nails. When Jesus was hanging on the cross naked, immobilized, forsaken by the father, what weapon did he choose to win? Grace. And that is the weapon God has given to us.

We Have Choices

- Read 2 Cor 5:16 What does that mean?
- It means you and I have a choice to know people in Christ or know people in the flesh. What does that mean?
- The person that hurt you, the person that rapped you, the person that abandon you, the person that committed adultery and left you holding the bag, that person in the flesh deserves punishment, harsh punishment in the natural, what he or she has done is terrible and they should be punished.
- But in Christ, that person is already forgiven. Christ already paid the price. If that person repents tomorrow, Christ isn't going back to the cross and shed some blood and return back to heaven. No no no. Christ died once an for all, so that person is already forgiven in Christ. Now you have a choice. You can look at him in the flesh and hate his guts or you can look at him in Christ as forgiven.
- The devil wants you to look at things in the natural and in the natural you will receive the grace of God in vain. But God would have you to see that rapist, the double crosser, the trader, the adulterer, the betrayer, the one who went back on their vows, and the one who took advantage of you..... In Christ, you see; Isa. 53:5

Jesus Used It

- What was the worst sin ever committed on this planet? The crucifixion of Jesus Christ.
- When the best of heaven was hanged on a cross by the worst of men. Agitated by the demons of hell. We took this holy man and hang him on a cross. Up until that moment the cross was a symbol of a curse and all that was evil. People didn't give crosses to each other it was like spitting on each other. But today we sing I will cherish that old rugged cross, we print crosses on our bibles, we hang crosses around our neck, we put them up in our churches. Why have the cross become such a dear symbol to us. Because when the worst sin was consummated and the ugliness of the cross was made uglier by putting an innocent man to death, God took grace and rapped it around it and said father forgive them for they know not what they do. At that moment the curse became mankind's greatest blessing
- what Satan intended for evil, God will use for good



Stephen Used It

- Paul was the destroyer of the church, when grace intervened, he became the builder of the church
- In the seventh chapter of act there is a young preacher by the name of Stephen. Preaching the gospel to a very reluctant audience. They don't want to hear him, so they cover their ears and they charge him. Agitated by a mad man, by the name of Saul, from the city of tarsus. They push him over a cliff, he falls to the bottom of the cliff and his face is like the face of an angel and Paul is demanding the soldiers under his command, to grab the biggest rock and aim for the head, and kill him like a snake. These rocks are coming down and fracturing the skull, and breaking the rib, and the ribs punctured the lungs, and Stephen begins to bleed internally and Stephen begins to drown in his own blood, and his pain is real. He looks up, and he sees the heavens open and the father on the throne, but Jesus is not sitting on the right hand of the father interceding, but he is standing up.
- Many theologians believe this is a position of judgment and Israel is committing the unforgivable sin. And when God sees the magnitude of such injustice and sin, God sees much more grace , and Stephen says, father lay not this sin to their charge. And Jesus when back to his seat. Acts

7:60

Paul Feels The Effect

- Just two chapters later Saul of Tarsus became Paul of Antioch. Some say Ananias lead Saul to the Lord, however, I believe he came because Stephen wrapped grace around that terrible sin. And Saul became a trophy on Gods grace, when Saul sinned against Stephen.
- Everybody that ever hurt you God has given us jurisdiction over them. Everybody that touch you with evil, God is saying I trust you to pay them with grace.
- We make the choice to allow grace to work. Consider these two circles:
- 1. Emotions; when we feel anger, bitterness. Emotions have no substance. 2. Convictions: what we choose to believe because god says they are true.
- A. When the emotion of anger returns, don't deny it, but, meet it with a conviction, saying, I forgive that person and i believe he is forgiven because God said so.
- B. Be empowered by gods grace. Take authority over the devil and his demons and cast them out
- C. Choose to forgive and confront Satan with grace (grace is what Satan fears most.