

Forgiveness

This parable puts forgiveness into perspective - Matt 18:23-35 - 23 "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. 26 "The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' 27 **The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.** 28 "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. 29 "**His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'** 30 "**BUT HE REFUSED. Instead, HE WENT OFF AND HAD THE MAN THROWN INTO PRISON UNTIL HE COULD PAY THE DEBT.** 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened. 32 "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to.' 33 **SHOULDN'T YOU HAVE HAD MERCY ON YOUR FELLOW SERVANT JUST AS I HAD ON YOU?'** 34 **In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.** 35 "**THIS IS HOW MY HEAVENLY FATHER WILL TREAT EACH OF YOU UNLESS YOU FORGIVE YOUR BROTHER FROM YOUR HEART.**"

Part of our repentance requires us to forgive others

In our prayers we are asking to be forgiven based on how we forgive - Matt 6:12 Forgive us our debts, **AS we** also have forgiven our debtors.

When we don't forgive others, it hinders us from being forgiven by God - Mark 11:25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, SO THAT your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

In a nutshell if you choose not to forgive, God WILL NOT forgive you - Matt 6:14-15 - 14 For **IF you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.** 15 But **IF YOU DO NOT FORGIVE MEN THEIR SINS, YOUR FATHER WILL NOT FORGIVE YOUR SINS.**

Some say there are two types of forgiveness that exist:

- 1) **Judicial Forgiveness** – The forgiveness God extends to all believers as our righteous Judge. This forgiveness is based solely on the redemptive work of Christ. This level of forgiveness makes us His children.
- 2) **Paternal Forgiveness** – The forgiveness God extends to us as our heavenly Father after we become his children. This forgiveness restores broken fellowship.

***TO BE CLEAR, THERE IS NO BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR THE CONCEPT OF DIFFERENT FORGIVENESS.**

Retaliation, is NEVER acceptable, revenge belongs to God ONLY - Rom 12:19 Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "IT IS MINE TO AVENGE; I will repay," says the Lord.

We are to work with Christians to display true Godly forgiveness

How you feel DOES NOT dictate if you have forgiven or not, unless your feelings are the basis on how you act - James 1:14-15 - 14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

The love we express must be God-given and shaped through His purification of our hearts. - 1 Peter 1:22 Now that you have purified yourselves by OBEYING THE TRUTH SO THAT you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, **from the heart.**

It's vital that Christians have a forgiving and loving character all the time with one another - Col 3:12-14 - 12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, **clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.** 13 **Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. FORGIVE AS THE LORD FORGAVE YOU.** 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

We are not to complain about other Christians - James 5:9 **Don't grumble against each other,** brothers, or **YOU WILL BE JUDGED.** The Judge is standing at the door!

While Forgiveness is a must, INCORRECTLY FORGETTING could be irresponsible

Granted, God says he will forget our sins

Heb 8:12 For I will forgive their wickedness and **will remember their sins no more.**"

Heb 10:17-18 - 17 Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more." 18 And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin.

***Concerning us "forgetting", we must take Christian accountability and Godly wisdom in to consideration**

The kind of 'forgetting' that love practices, is to refuse to store up past wrongs as ammunition or self-justification. - 1 Cor 13:5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

For believers, accountability needs to work hand in hand with forgiveness - Luke 17:3-4 - 3 So watch yourselves. "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. 4 If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him."

***Like with God's forgiveness, this means our forgiveness is always offered, however the person benefits from that forgiveness only when they receive it.**

There is a God-given process to dealing with conflicts with other believers Matt 18:15-17 - 15 "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over." 16 But **if he will not listen**, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' 17 **If he refuses to listen to them**, tell it to the church; and **if he refuses to listen** even to the church, **TREAT HIM AS YOU WOULD A PAGAN OR A TAX COLLECTOR.**

When we forgive, we still must use Godly judgment on how to respond

If we judge incorrectly, we are in the danger of being corrupted - 1 Cor 15:33 Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."

Be warned, how you judge, will be how you're judged - Matt 7:1-2 - "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. 2 For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

We have a responsibility to others in the Body - Gal 6:1-5 - Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are **SPIRITUAL should RESTORE HIM GENTLY**. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. 2 **Carry each other's burdens**, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. 3 If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, 5 for **each one should carry his own load**.

We MUST hold others accountable to how they live in the Body - 1 Cor 5:11-13 - 11 But now I am writing you that **you must not associate with** anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. 12 What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? 13 God will judge those outside. **"Expel the wicked man from among you."**

***Do NOT be the cause of a repeat offender** - Prov 19:19 A hot-tempered man must pay the penalty; IF YOU RESCUE HIM, you will have to do it again.

Every Christian MUST use wisdom to deal with danger - Prov 22:3 A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.

We are blessed with wisdom to assess and act accordingly for our safety - Prov 22:24-25 - 24 **DO NOT MAKE FRIENDS with a hot-tempered man, DO NOT ASSOCIATE with one easily angered**, 25 or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared.

We are blessed with wisdom to assess a person's character with instruction on how to respond - Titus 3:10-11 - 10 Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. **AFTER THAT, HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM**. 11 You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned. * **Though you continue to forgive**

Let us sum up what forgiveness looks like

* If your response is retaliation for what a person did to you, then you have NOT forgiven

* If your response is based on wisdom or righteousness then you have forgiven. (Only God and you know. God cannot be mocked (Gal 6:7-9))