

Let Forgiveness Flow Through Your Relationships

#RelationshipGoals God's Way! Pt.3

Matthew 18:21-35; Luke 15:11-24

October 2, 2016

Ephesians 4:31, *Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³²Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.*

“To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you” (C. S. Lewis).

“The voice of sin is loud, but the voice of forgiveness is louder” (Dwight L. Moody).

Forgiveness Is The Key To Restoring Broken Relationships:

1. Jesus Sets Forth The Expectation And Extent Of Forgiveness - It's Not Optional And It Is UNLIMITED

Matthew 18:21, *Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?” ²²Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.”*

2. Jesus' Example Of Forgiveness:

- **Infinite FORGIVENESS**

Matthew 18:23, *“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him... ²⁶At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ ²⁷The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.”*

- **Self-Righteous HYPOCRISY**

Matthew 18:28, *“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. 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 it back.’ ³⁰“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.”*

- **Just REPAYMENT**

Matthew 18:31, *When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened... ³⁴In anger his master handed 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 or sister from your heart.”*

The Ultimate Example Of Forgiveness:

Luke 15:11, *And He said, “There was a man who had two sons. ¹²And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. ¹³Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living... ¹⁷“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! ¹⁸I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.”’... ²²But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. ²³And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. ²⁴For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.’ And they began to celebrate.*

1. What We Can Learn From The Sinning Son:

- The sinful son clearly repented of his sin, turned from his sinful ways, didn't make excuses for his sinful behavior and returned home with humble expectations.

2. What We Can Learn From The Forgiving Father:

- The forgiving father did not fund further sin, clearly desired repentance more than judgment, received the repenting son back, restored the sinning son to his previous position and celebrated the sinning son's return.

"Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function regardless of the temperature of the heart" (Corrie ten Boom).

Cottonwood Challenge - Five Thoughts On Forgiveness:

Study: Daniel 9:9; Matthew 6:14-15; Mark 11:25; Luke 6:37, 17:3-4; Acts 3:19; 2 Corinthians 2:5-8; Ephesians 4:31-32; Hebrews 10:17; 1 John 1:9.

1. **Forgiveness:** If you have been hurt, be determined to forgive regardless of how you feel. If you have hurt someone, truly repent and seek forgiveness sensitively.
2. **Plan:** Develop a plan that will prevent future sin and restore trust in the relationship.
3. **Stop:** Once the facts are known and agreed upon, stop dwelling on and retelling the story, it won't help!
4. **Grace:** Seek grace moving forward in trust and trustworthiness.
5. **Seek:** If you can't get past the pain to forgiveness, seek professional help.