

## **How Do I Forgive Others? June 7, 2015**

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**Week 5 in our series: What's Love Got to Do with it?** We are considering how God loves us and our response of loving God with actions: in the way we love others made in His image. Today we will look at a hard part of love—forgiveness.

**How many of you would recognize the Lord's Prayer?**

- in Matthew 6 & Luke 11
- "Our Father, Who art in Heaven..."
- **"forgive us our sins just as we forgive those who have sinned against us" in your outline**

**[In Your Notes:] Here's what forgiving others is not—**

**Forgiving others is not: (quickly on these)**

**1. justifying their actions.**

- "Well, they were under a lot of stress."
- "You know, they're going through a lot right now..."
- "I don't think they meant it that way."

**2. Waiting for time to go by**

- Anyone remember something from 5, 10, or 20 years ago that still stings? A lot? Time doesn't forgive.

**3. denying that you are hurt.**

- it didn't hurt, It doesn't matter
- I didn't notice anything
- It didn't affect me...I'm a real man!!

**4. confronting them personally.**

- "give me an apology!"
- It's not seeking revenge / getting even
- **Forgiveness is not any of these!**

**So what does it mean to really forgive others?**

It is choosing to let the offense go. This is Forgiveness!

**So where do we begin? Four steps.**

**Step 1 is to Remember how MUCH I've been forgiven**

- In Jesus God erases our past, calls us His kids
- He forgives us completely!
- **Never forget where you came from / who you belong to!**

Isaiah 1:18 talks about God's complete forgiveness.

**“Come, let us talk this over says the Lord. No matter how deep the stain of your sin, I can take it out and make you as clean as freshly fallen snow. Even if you are stained as red as crimson. I can make you white as wool.” (TLB)**

- **You have to get this step down first because only forgiven people can truly forgive others.**

**Let me share the Story of the Unforgiving Servant.** It's in Mt. 18

- A King is owed lots of money. He bring debtors in.
- 1<sup>st</sup> guy owes **millions**...I can't pay it
- Throw his family in prison (**like missing a rent payment!**)
- Be patient with me...I will pay it back!
- King was merciful and cancelled / forgave the debt. Basically he said, “You're FREE!”
- Outside this man sees a person who owes him **\$200**, chokes him demanding it back
- Man asks for mercy but NO!!
- King finds out, throws man in jail...

**Read the rest with me in your outline: It says,**

**“Then, the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, you evil servant I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me, shouldn't you have mercy on your fellow servant just as I had mercy on you? Then the angry king sent the man to prison until he had paid every penny.” (vss. 32-34, NLT)**

**Jesus adds this commentary: (Vs. 35)**

**“That's what my Heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters in your hearts.”**

**WOW!! Who do *YOU* need to forgive this morning?**

**How do I forgive Others? Step 2 is:**

**2. Release the person entirely.**

**“Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. . . Dear friends, never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God. For it is written, ‘I will take vengeance; I will repay those who deserve it,’ says the Lord.”  
-Romans 12:17, 19**

- **Who** are you thinking about right now? Let it go!
- Release means to set free
- No more rehearsing over & over in your minds
- **It’s a choice, a decision, we have to make!**
- **I read one time that holding a grudge is like drinking poison and hoping the other person get’s sick. Have you ever done that? Have you ever held a grudge?**

**“But Pastor Peter, what about my bitterness & resentment?”**

- **This heals over time**
- **What starts it? When you and I release people**

**But Pastor Peter, how do you release someone emotionally?**

- **Write a letter to the person (explicit), seal it, never mail it**
- **Talk to a chair, picturing the person there**
- **Hold a picture of that person and talk to it**
- **Then release them! “Say, I FORGIVE YOU! GOD, HELP ME LET THIS GO...”**
- **When we release, we give up our right to repayment and revenge.**

**\*\*Release or rehearse: you have the choice.**

**Step 3: Repeat the Process!**

Have you ever read the back of a shampoo bottle? It's kind of funny what it says.

It says, "wash, rinse, repeat!"

Peter asks how many times to forgive someone. What answer does he get from Jesus? Mt. 18:22:

**"No! Jesus replied, seventy times seven!"**

- **Listen, you have been thinking of one person that you need to forgive.**
- **Write their initials on your Wall of Forgiveness**
- **Get ready to nail it to the cross!**

**How many times do you want God to forgive YOU?**

In Matthew 6:14-15. Jesus said,

**"If you forgive those who sin against you, your Heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive our sins."**

**Strong language!!**

**Experience the freedom that is found in your notes:**

**"Be kind and loving to each other and forgive others just as God forgave you in Christ." - Ephesians 4:32.**

**Lets Pray:**

**Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for how much You have forgiven me. Today, I forgive (just say their name, the person you are forgiving). God, I'm forgiving them for (you just tell God what it is. He already knows, but there is something about saying it and releasing that person). Just continue to pray. God show me the action I need to take to reestablish the relationship. Help me to forgive others as much as you have forgiven me. In Jesus name. Amen.**