

Baggage
What's Weighing You Down
And Impeding Your Progress
Session 4
Lord, Teach Me To Forgive

Mark 11:25-26 NKJV "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."

We must learn to forgive because Forgiving is not natural. We naturally want to get even.

Forgiveness is one of the most unnatural responses in all of human nature. Think about it. It's like giving a gift to someone who just hurt you. In fact, that is exactly what it is, however, when you can do this, you also give a gift of freedom to yourself.

A Parable of Forgiveness

*Matthew 18:21-32 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, **how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven***

times? Jesus said to him, I say not, seven times: but seventy times seven. Therefore, is the kingdom of heaven like a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought to him, which owed him ten thousand talents. 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.

The King forgave the servant over \$3 BILLION

The servant then found a fellow servant who owed him \$197 and could not repay him so he had him thrown into prison.

(Matthew 18:34-35 KJV. And his lord was wroth (angry) and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise, shall my heavenly Father do also to you, if you from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.)

- **For how long?** Until from your heart you forgive others their trespasses.
- **Why would God deliver us to the tormentors?** In order for us to repent and forgive so we can be free.

When we don't forgive the Bible tells us we experience bondage:

People who refuse to forgive are tormented. They have no idea that this torment comes from their failure to handle properly those wrongs committed against them.

- They have no idea that they can be free.
- It is a great miracle when they discover the truth and are released.

When we are hurt, there is a progression that happens in our emotion, if we don't handle it immediately:



Hurt turns to anger



Anger turns to bitterness



Bitterness turns to torment

How important is forgiveness to God?

Look at what we call The Lord's Prayer: (Matthew 6:12)

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

Jesus is telling us, when you pray, amid all your praise and petition, be sure to affirm that you are willing to do what God

does: You are forgiving those who are your debtors and don't deserve your pardon.

Just in case you didn't get the point, look at *Matthew 6:14-15*

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses.

Jesus isn't referring here to what theologians call "salvation forgiveness" (that forgiveness is a gift of God to all who believe in Jesus Christ and His work on the cross as full payment for their sins). He is rather referring to the flow of God's pardon in our daily lives.

God doesn't think of forgiveness as simply a nice idea or a mere suggestion. It is imperative to your spiritual health:

Five areas affected by your failure to forgive:

1. Your peace

2. Your health. Unresolved anger causes stress, heart problems, cancer, high blood pressure and many other illnesses.

3. Your relationships. Not just your relationship with the one who hurt you, but all relationships in your life are affected by unforgiveness.

4. Your position against Satan. Ephesians 4 cautions us to be angry, but don't sin because you don't want to give Satan an opportunity against you. *(2 Corinthians 2:10 Amplified If you forgive anyone anything, I too forgive that one; and what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sakes in the presence and with the approval of Christ. 11. To keep Satan from getting the advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his wiles and intentions.)* **You can't avoid getting angry, but you must handle it immediately and correctly.**

5. Your faith and your prayers. *(Mark 11:22-26 So Jesus answered and said to them, Have Faith in God. For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, Be removed and be cast into the sea and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever*

things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them and you will have them And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.” (earlier we read this same statement in Matthew’s Gospel). **Remember...** Jesus isn’t referring here to what theologians call “salvation forgiveness” (that forgiveness is a gift of God to all who believe in Jesus Christ and His work on the cross as full payment for their sins). He is rather referring to the flow of God’s pardon in our daily lives.

Who do we need to forgive?

- God.
- Yourself.
- Those who have hurt you

Three Facts That Will Help You Forgive

1. **Jesus forgave you** - you can choose to forgive others.
2. **Vengeance belongs to God - not to you or to me** (*Romans 12:17-21 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good*)
3. **Your torment won't end until you forgive.** Then it will end immediately. You will be free and that's what God wants for you.

FROM THE BOOK: TOTAL FORGIVENESS

By R. T. Kendall

Forgiveness is:

1. Being aware of what someone has done and still forgiving them.

2. Choosing to keep no records of wrong.
3. Refusing to punish.
4. Not telling others what they did
5. Being merciful
6. Being gracious
7. In inner condition (We cannot change our hearts, but we can, by an act of our will, change our mind to position us for God to change our heart.)
8. The absence of bitterness
9. A CHOICE
10. A LIFESTYLE

Forgiveness is not:

1. Approving what was done
2. Excusing what was done.
3. Justifying what was done.
4. Pardoning what was done.

5. Reconciliation. Reconciliation takes the participation of two parties, but you can forgive even before there is reconciliation.
6. Denying what was done.
7. Blindness to what happened.
8. Forgetting. Although you may not be able to forget the wrong, you can make the choice not to dwell on the wrong.
9. Refusing to take the wrong seriously.
10. Pretending you are not hurt.
11. An Emotion - It is a Decision!!!!

What if each morning you walked out the door knowing you were carrying a miracle key that could release someone from prison? We are surrounded by sincere, law-abiding people who are prisoners and don't even know it. The miracle key is the "forgiveness key". The Forgiveness Key unlocks a miracle of freedom for those who suffer, as a result of unforgiveness.

Prayer:

Father, I want to forgive. I release my enemy from their sins against me. I ask you to release them also. I do not desire for their sin to be in my life, so I turn to you Lord, and I ask you to work forgiveness in my life, in Jesus' name, Amen.