



CONCLUSION: A BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATION--LUKE 7:36-50.

1. The Principles:

- a. One of the greatest hindrances to complete confession and forgiveness is our self-righteousness.
- b. Inevitably, the people who have the greatest sense of forgiveness in their lives are those who grant the greatest forgiveness.

2. Personal Application: See "The Steps to Forgiveness."

- a. Are you walking in the forgiveness of God, i.e., do you know your sins are forgiven?
- b. Is there anyone who has been hurt by you, and you have not asked for their forgiveness? (Possible ways to hurt or offend - stealing, lying, temper, damaged reputation, ungratefulness, bitterness, rebellion, pride, moral impurity, failure to show love.)
- c. Are you willing to make a plan of restitution in order to gain a clear conscience? What will it be?

STEPS YOU WILL TAKE:

<p>1)</p> <p>2)</p> <p>3)</p> <p>4)</p> <p>5)</p>

TWO SIDES OF FORGIVENESS

Matt. 6:12,14-15; Lk. 7:36-50

We love It We Loathe It
 We Need It ↔ We Need to Give It



The
 School
 of
 Discipleship

WE NEED TO BE FORGIVEN--MATT. 6:12,14-15

- 1. What is our debt?
 "Debt" is a Jewish metaphor for sin/missing the mark.
- 2. What will forgiveness do for us? Why do we need it?
 - a. **First**, forgiveness will cancel the debts we owe--Rom. 3:23; Ps. 58:3; Jer. 13:23.
 - b. **Second**, forgiveness adjusts our course--Heb. 12:1-2.
 - c. **Third**, forgiveness rekindles our joy--Ps. 51:8,12.
 - d. **Fourth**, forgiveness softens our hearts toward others--Lk. 7:36-50.
 - e. **Fifth**, forgiveness removes the guilt--Ps. 32:5.
 - f. **Sixth**, forgiveness releases us from the grip of history, i.e., our past and its effect on us.
- 3. How are we forgiven by God?
 - a. **By Christ's work on the cross**--Is. 53:6; 43:25; I Pet. 2:24; I John 2:2,12; II Cor. 5:21; Ps. 85:2; 103:12; Micah 7:18-19; John 8:36; Jer. 31:34.



HIS WORK

He took our sins on Himself.
"The Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all..." Is. 53:6; I Pet. 2:24; I John 2:2; II Cor. 5:21.

He covered our sins.
"You forgave the iniquity of your people and covered all their sins" Ps. 85:2.

He blotted out our sins.
"I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions..." Is. 43:25a.

He forgets our sins.
"...and remembers your sins no more" Is. 43:25b; Jer. 31:34.

He cleanses us from all unrighteousness.
"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" I John 1:9.

He removes our sins as far as the east is from the west and buries them in the depths of the sea.
"As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgression from us." "You hurled our iniquities into the depths of the sea" Ps. 103:12; Micah 7:18-19.

- b. **By confession of sin to God**--I John 1:9.
- c. **By repenting from sin**--Luke 24:46-47; II Cor. 7:10-11.
- 1) Case Study--John 8:1-11. What was the command of Jesus?
 - 2) Case Study--Luke 15:11-24. See the steps:
 - a) His sin caused him to suppress the truth about his action--v. 17a (see Romans 1:18).

*The logical consequences of his sin brought him to his senses--vv. 14-17.

*Instruction from the Word can bring a person to their senses too--II Tim. 2:24-26.

- f. "I know I should forgive, but they don't know how much they've hurt me and I can't forgive the hurt. I want them to suffer like I have."
- 1) Didn't God forgive us completely, even though it cost Him His life?
 - 2) Why do we act this way? (We want revenge/the guilty to pay.)
 - 3) What will really be best and fair for us?
 - a) Forgiving releases us from a past that was unfair to us.
 - b) Forgiveness turns off the videotape planted in the soul that can't be turned off.
 - 4) What should be our stance? Eph. 4:31-32
 - 5) What does the Scripture say to us? I John 1:9

When we say, "I'm going to make them suffer for that" we'd better think twice. Christ has already paid for their sin. He bore it in His body. What more do we want? If a holy and righteous God can forgive that person who has offended us (because He has taken that sin and put it on His Son), who are we to demand further payment and suffering beyond what Christ has done?

7. **Seventh**, forgive as Christ forgave--Col. 2:13-14; Lk. 23:34. He's our model. "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."
8. **Eighth**, if possible, seek to be reconciled to the one who has offended you--Matt. 5:23-26; Rom. 12:17-21.
9. **Ninth**, continue to forgive, as many times as you are offended--Matt. 18:21-35.
Note: This doesn't mean, however, that we enable their sin or put our physical and emotional life deliberately in jeopardy.



Principle: The basis for most of our relationship dysfunction among believers is the lack of forgiveness.

3. **Third**, ask God to forgive you because you haven't forgiven others. Acknowledge this as sin; repent of it and forsake it!
4. **Fourth**, begin to pray for your enemy--Matt. 5:44. If you need to, express your anger to God--Ps. 10:5.
5. **Fifth**, be sure that the hurt really needs forgiveness. Some hurts we can shrug off:
 - a. Annoyances--people are late for appointments, cut in front of us;
 - b. Defeats--some succeed when we fail, we are ignored;
 - c. Slights--people ignore us, don't invite us to their house, etc.
6. **Sixth**, put away wrong attitudes and statements.
 - a. "I'm not able to forgive this person."
 - b. "If I act forgiving toward them, then they will think I endorse their sin, or they'll use that to take advantage of me."
 - c. "I'm responsible to put as much pressure on them as I can so they'll come to repentance. To forgive them would let them off the hook and take off the heat."
 - d. "I'll forgive him/her, but I'll never speak to them again."
 - e. "I'll forgive him, but I won't forget."



- b) He recognized he had sinned against God and his father--vv. 18,21,25-32.
 - i) True repentance always recognizes that sin has been committed against God.
 - ii) True repentance also involves confession of sin to those we have offended, injured, angered.
 - c) He felt unworthy of total restoration--v. 19.
Note: There is recognition of the need for grace and his being unworthy of forgiveness.
 - d) He took the steps to leave his life of sin and return to his father--v. 20.
Note: Is it a long way back to God?
 - e) He encountered his father's loving arms and received his forgiveness and restoration of relationship--vv. 20-24.
Note: When we repent, God runs to us.
4. How do we restore relationships with those we have sinned against?
 - a. What does restoration/repentance involve?--II Cor. 7:8-13. (List the specific characteristics of repentance.)
 - b. How do we know when we need to seek forgiveness?
 - 1) Ask these questions:
 - a) Have I stolen from anyone--Eph. 4:28?
 - b) Have I damaged another's reputation?
 - c) Have I gossiped about another?
 - d) Have I been ungrateful?
 - e) Have I had a bitter spirit?
 - f) Have I rebelled against authority?
 - g) Have I had a prideful spirit with others?
 - h) Have I failed to show genuine love to someone?
 - i) Have I been morally impure with someone?
 - 2) List them in order of importance, with the ones that are causing you the most guilt at the top.



3) Go through the list and make restitution as the Holy Spirit prompts you.

- a) **The speed:** Do it quickly--Matt. 5:23-26.
- b) **The biblical basis**--Num. 5:5-7; Ex. 21:18-19; Eccl. 5:4-5; Lev. 6:2-7; Ezek. 33:14-16; Eph. 4:28.
- c) **An example**--Luke 19:1-10.

5. What is the result of restitution/repentance/forgiveness?
A clear conscience--I Pet. 3:16; I Tim. 1:18-19; II Cor. 1:12; Prov. 28:13b; Ps. 32:1-2.
6. What will be the result if we don't repent and receive God's forgiveness? Ps. 32:3-4; Prov. 28:13a.

QUESTIONS

What is your response to this teaching? What will be the outcome of this for a person who follows through? Are there any dangers?

WE NEED TO FORGIVE OTHERS--MATT. 6:12,14-15

1. Our forgiveness of others is a necessary prerequisite to our continued forgiveness--Matt. 6:14-15; 5:7, 21-24; Ps. 66:18; James 2:13; Mk. 11:25.

ILLUSTRATION: MATTHEW 18:21-35

- a. **Observation #1:** "It's amazing how awful my sins look when I see others doing the same thing."
- b. **Observation #2:** "If we have an exaggerated view of the offenses of others against us--IT PROVES THAT WE HAVE MINIMIZED OUR OWN OFFENSES/SINS."
- c. **Observation #3:** "Forgiving is not smoothing things over. Forgiveness happens only when we admit our hurt, hate, anger."

- d. **Observation #4:** "Forgiveness doesn't mean we give a person a license to continue sinning." If they are a believer, we grant forgiveness in the framework of Matthew 18:15-17. If a person is breaking the law, we appeal to the courts. If they are seeking to harm us physically, sexually, or emotionally, we retreat to safety and get the help we and they need.

2. Forgiveness releases others to grow and be free from guilt --Gen. 42:21-22,43-45.
3. Forgiveness rids us of the roots of bitterness--Heb. 12:14-15. Bitterness causes trouble for us, defiles others, and costs too much!

THE STEPS TO FORGIVENESS

REVIEW AND APPLICATION

1. **First**, take an inventory of your life: **a.** What do you see in the mirror--James 1:22-27? **b.** What does your spiritual image look like? **c.** Have you committed your life fully to Christ--II Cor. 13:5? **d.** Has your past been dealt with? **e.** Are you free from guilt--Ps. 32:5? **f.** Have you taken the following steps? 1) Confess your sins--I John 1:9. 2) Repent: turn from your sins--Luke 24:46-47. 3) Receive God's forgiveness by faith. 4) Ask others to forgive you --Lk. 15:21. 5) Make restitution if needed--Lk. 19:1-10. **g.** Take an inventory and see if there are any 2x4's in your eyes--Matt. 7:3-5.
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2. **Second**, take an inventory of those who bother you/bug you.
- a. Whose case are you on a lot?
 - b. Who are you suspicious of? Who can't you trust?
 - c. Do you often see this person as your problem?



Application Questions:

- a. Describe the impact of forgiveness or lack of forgiveness from sin on your life, i.e., emotions, physical ailments, etc.?
- b. If you have participated in restitution or sought the forgiveness of another, what was the result?
- c. What would be some general steps that a person should take if they feel they are to make restitution for some sin? Would you be willing to take such steps yourself? What would motivate you the most to follow through?
- d. What is one thing that stands out in each of the following incidents that is the most important or interesting to you personally?--Jn. 8:1-11; Lk. 15:11-24; 19:1-10; 7:36-50.
- e. What hinders or helps you/others the most when it comes to forgiving a person who has sinned against you?
- f. Contrast the effects of forgiveness with the effects of bitterness and revenge. Why is revenge/bitterness so destructive and so unfair to the one who has been hurt?
- g. What is your answer to the statements and attitudes expressed on pages 6-7 of this outline?

