

Forgiving One Another

Introduction

Ephesians 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

1. **Christ came into the world and died for all mankind so that we can experience and gain true forgiveness.**
2. **Not a single one of us is perfect. We sin and come short of the glory of God. When forgiven, we can now concentrate on living and doing the work that is before us.**
 - A. **Not being bothered by our conscience. All this is possible because of God's great love for us.**

Why We Should Forgive

1. **Because we have been forgiven.**
 - A. **The fact that we have received mercy should teach us to give mercy in return.**
Matthew 18:23-35
2. **Because we often stand in need of forgiveness.**

1 John 1:8-10 If we say that we have no sin, **we deceive ourselves**, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

- A. **We need forgiveness from the Lord. Every sin we commit is against Him.**
- B. **We need forgiveness from our fellow man. We sin against one another. Only those who forgive are forgiven (Matt 6:14-16).**

3. **That we may experience the joy known only to the forgiving heart.**
4. **That others may have joy.**
 - A. **The greatest need of the world is love and forgiveness.**
 - B. **Hearts hunger for it, and rejoice when it is given.**
5. **Because it is Christ-like.**

Luke 23:23 But they were insistent, **demanding with loud voices that He be crucified.** And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed.

- A. **We are never more like our Savior than when we forgive, or more un-like Him when we are unforgiving.**
- B. **It is beneath the dignity of our calling not to forgive.**
 - 1) **A father once said to his son:** "My son, treat everyone with politeness, even those who are rude to you. For remember that you show courtesy to others, not because they are gentlemen, but because you are one."
- C. **We should forgive because we are Christians!**

How We Should Forgive

1. **Forgiveness must be "from the heart" for it to be right and effective.**

Matthew 18:35 "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

- A. **Lip-service forgiveness is a deception or counterfeit.**
- B. **To forgive is to forget and just move on.**

Hebrews 8:12 "for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

2. Forgiveness should be without limit.

Matthew 18:21-22 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? **Up to seven times?**" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but **up to seventy times seven.**

- A. GREAT TEXTS OF THE BIBLE: "There are no degrees of forgiveness. There are degrees in the holiness that follows forgiveness; but pardon must be perfect at birth."**

3. Forgive as Christ forgives. This will include:

- A. The darkest sins.**
- B. Fully and completely.**
- C. Freely.**

The Evil of Unforgiveness

- 1. It crucifies the higher self.**
 - A. Strangling that which is the best within us.**
- 2. It crushes friendships.**
 - A. Like a prison wall, it isolates us from humanity and from God.**
 - 1) Giving to life a state of loneliness.**
- 3. The bottom line: God DOES NOT forgive the unforgiving.**

Conclusion

1. **Joseph forgave his wicked brothers and did them good.**
2. **David forgave Saul, who was seeking to kill him.**
3. **Stephen forgave his murderers.**
4. **Our precious Lord and Savior forgave his bitterest foes.**
5. **May we all take on the same type of spirit and forgive one another.**

Luke 6:27-28 "But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

6. **If a brother has sinned, bring him to repentance and remember his sin no more.**

Matthew 18:15 "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault **between you and him alone**. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.

Galatians 6:1-2 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual **restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness**, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

