

## “Forgive Like Jesus”

To forgive is to let go of an offense; to let go of both my right to demand payment or punishment and my right to remember and rehearse the offense. But that's not easy for us - it's incredibly hard to forgive people like Jesus did. So Jesus gives us not only instruction but also motivation. He tells us to forgive one another because, first, we have already been forgiven infinitely more by God, and second, because withholding forgiveness will cost us greatly - God will withhold His forgiveness of us and will allow us to experience the pain and suffering that always accompany an unforgiving heart. So let us turn to Him and ask for help to forgive one another like Jesus did.

### “forgive” (*aphiēmi*)

- To permit someone to do something  
Matthew 3:15  
But Jesus said to him, “Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead.”
- To leave someone or something behind  
Matthew 4:20  
Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.
- To give away something; let it be taken  
Matthew 5:40  
“If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.”
- To neglect a responsibility  
Matthew 23:23  
“...you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law; justice and mercy and faithfulness...”
- To forgive = to let go of, release an offense

### I. How to forgive

1. Give up my right to demand payment or punishment  
– *Matthew 5:38-39*

Romans 12:19

Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

– *But don't overlook or ignore*

Luke 17:3

...If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him...

## 2. Choose not to rehearse the offense

Isaiah 43:25

"I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins."

Colossians 2:13-14

...He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

1 Corinthians 13:4-5

Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered...

## II. Why should we forgive?

Matthew 18:21-35

1. Because I've been forgiven of far more
  - *10,000 talents = 60 million days' wages!*
  - *100 denarii = 100 days' wages (1/600,000th)*

1 Peter 3:18

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit

2. Because withholding forgiveness will cost me greatly
  - a) God will not forgive me

Two types of forgiveness

1. Legal / eternal forgiveness
  - Context: legal court
  - Timing: past-tense; moment-in-time; permanent
  - Result: justification & eternal life

Colossians 2:13-14

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2. Relational forgiveness - 1 John 1:5-9

- Context: fellowship with God
- Timing: continual need
- Result: cleansing & restoration of fellowship

b) I will be miserable (v34 "torture")

"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you." — *Lewis Smedes*

### **Application**

Luke 17:4-5

"And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him."

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"