

Forgiveness (Scripture and Study)

1) Definition of Forgiveness:

Forgiveness is a decision to release someone from all indebtedness or obligation from damage done to me, whether the damage is emotional, social, physical or financial, etc.

2) The Basis for Forgiveness

-God's forgiveness of us - **Matthew 18:23-35** - *"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he had begun to settle them, one who owed him ten thousand talents* was brought to him. But since he did not have the means to repay, his lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment to be made. So the slave fell to the ground and prostrated himself before him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.' And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt.*

*But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii**; and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, 'Pay back what you owe.' So his fellow slave fell to the ground and began to plead with him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you.' But he was unwilling and went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed. So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened.*

*Then summoning him, his lord said to him, 'You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?' And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him. My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart." **Denarius was one-day wage for the common laborer (today approx. \$100). So 100 denarii x \$100 = \$10,000 *Talent = 6000 denarii (16 years wages) So one talent is 6000 x \$100 = \$600,000*

Then 10,000 talents is 10,000 x \$600,000 = \$6,000,000,000 (\$6 billion)

3) The Example of Forgiveness

-The Lord's example to us -**Ephesians 4:32** - *Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other,*

just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

4) The Extent of Forgiveness

-No limit - **Matthew 18:21-22** - *Then Peter came and said to Him, "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.*

5) The Elements of Forgiveness

- 1) An injury.
- 2) A debt.
- 3) A cancellation of the debt.

-Romans 12:17-21 - *Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. 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 IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD."* Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

6) The Expense of Forgiveness – the cost

The person who forgives absorbs the pain and loss of an offense and pays a certain price. For example, say I spread a rumor about you that ruins your reputation. To forgive me, you must bear the consequences of my action and deal with the effects of the damage to your reputation.

Another example; If I clumsily break your priceless, treasured heirloom, and you forgive me, you bear the loss of losing something that cannot be replaced even by a large sum of money.

7) The Expense of Unforgiveness – the cost.

-Ephesians 4:26-27 - *BE ANGRY, AND yet DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and*

do not give the devil an opportunity.

– The devil acquires a foothold in your life from which to attack you. “Foothold” is a military term. It is a base of operation in your territory from which an enemy can inflict damage upon you.

8) The Excuses for Forgiveness – what forgiveness isn't.

-Explaining why, or understanding what motivated someone to sin against you – “She had a rough childhood”.

-Minimizing the damage to you of an offense. When the damage is greater than you will admit, your forgiveness will fall short too, leaving unresolved damage.

-Forgetting or blocking out the offense. This may be less painful but prevents resolution and healing. -Asking God to help you forgive. Though we need His help to forgive, we must choose to not hold someone's sin against them.

-Insisting on an apology before you forgive.

-There is, however, a covering over of a sin which is very biblical – **1 Peter 4:8** - *Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.*

9) The Steps of Forgiveness. 1) Recall the offense.

2) Recount the damage done to you. We may be tempted to pass over this step or think it too self-centered, but consider David's process for dealing with deep hurts:

-Psalm 31:9-13 - Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress; My eye is wasted away from grief, my soul and my body also. For my life is spent with sorrow And my years with sighing; My strength has failed because of my iniquity, And my body has wasted away. Because of all my adversaries, I have become a reproach, Especially to my neighbors, And an object of dread to my acquaintances; Those who see me in the street flee from me. I am forgotten as a dead man, out of mind; I am like a broken vessel. For I have heard the slander of many, Terror is on every side; While they took counsel together against me, They schemed to take away my life.

-Notice that David assessed the damage of the pain and loss (emotional, social, physical or financial). -List your pain and damages specifically.

3) Realize God's view of the offense.

4) Release the person from any debt owed to you for what they did. **5) Request blessings from God on the person.**

-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, pray for those who mistreat you.

10) What if I still can't forgive?

-Go talk directly to the person, *not everyone else* - **Matthew 18:15-17** - *If your brother sins, go and show*

him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

-Remember that it is by Christ's supernatural power from within that we forgive. Ask Him for the strength and the ability to forgive.