

## **FORGIVENESS -- Choosing to Grow in Receiving and Giving Away Genuine Forgiveness**

### **Can I really be forgiven?**

Be gracious to me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness;

According to the greatness of Thy compassion, blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity; and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, and done what is evil in Thy sight...

Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;

Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. –King David, Psalm 51:1-4, 7

If we confess our sins, He is **faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins** and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. –I John 1:9

### **Can I really, effectively forgive others who have sinned against me?**

Read Matthew 6:11-15

Matthew 18:21-35

Mark 11:25

Luke 23:32-34

Ephesians 4:20-32

Colossians 2:11-15; 3:1-17

“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors...” For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.” –Jesus, Matthew 6:12,14-15

And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion... forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone, just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. –Colossians 3:12-13

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... And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, **forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.** –Ephesians 4:26-27, 32

### **How did God forgive me in Christ?**

But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities.

The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed...

The Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him...

The Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief,

If He would render Himself as a guilt offering...

“The Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as he will bear their iniquities...

Because He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors;

Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors.” –Isaiah 53:5-6,10-12

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. –II Corinthians 5:21

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him... reconciled to God through the death of His Son. –Romans 5:8-10

And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation (substitutionary sacrifice and payment) for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. –I John 2:1-2

There is therefore now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus. –Romans 8:1

## FORGIVENESS

### Choosing to Pursue More Effective Forgiveness

*Every time* I prepare to pursue forgiveness, I will prayerfully keep choosing these things in agreement with God:

1. *Only* in the Father's presence –refusing to do this apart from Him.
2. *Only* with the help of the Holy Spirit –refusing to rely on my own memory, understanding or power.
3. *Only* for the Father's purpose of forgiveness –refusing to nourish bitterness or alliance with the Accuser, refusing to carry this into my conversations, dreams or other activities of the day.

#### The Pursuit of Biblical Forgiveness

1. Agreeing with God concerning the debt –an *accurate accounting* of the debt to be forgiven.

**The Sin-** the words, actions, attitudes, patterns, choices made that hurt me, wronged me or cost me.  
Words- Matt.12:36-37  
Thoughts- Hebrews 4:12  
Motives- I Corinthians 4:5  
Deeds- Revelation 20:12

**The Cost-** the hurtful, damaging, negative impact of that sin in my life; what I experienced or paid for that sin –emotionally, physically, spiritually, socially, financially, in terms of relationships lost or damaged, loss of self-worth/esteem/image, hopes and dreams affected, past/present/future impact—any negative impact in any area of my life.

2. Agreeing with God that *every* part of that debt – the sins themselves and every cost that flowed from those sins – is completely and effectively transferred to Jesus Christ at the Cross – that Jesus literally and truly *became* this debt of guilt. –II Cor. 5:21
3. Agreeing with God that the *only* appropriate payment for this list of sins – for any sin, and their costs – is death. –Rom. 6:23
4. Agreeing with God that His holy wrath was poured out on Jesus Christ until this debt was *fully* paid. –Isaiah 53:5
5. Agreeing with God that if this death payment is sufficient to satisfy His perfect justice and for *Him to forgive sin*, then I choose that it is sufficient for me! –Ephesians 4:32
6. Agreeing with God to return with Him to this Cross of payment, to agree with Him on these truths, any time the Accuser, or my own flesh, try to stir up fresh accusation or bitterness, resentment or guilt -- any sense of indebtedness-- over this debt of sin. –Matt. 18:21-22

#### Some Protective Recognitions

**Forgiveness**, even deep and genuine forgiveness—

...is not the same as *Trust*.

It is not the same as *Reconciliation* and mutual *Restoration*.

It is not the same as *Friendship* and *Intimacy*.

...because *both* people have to make choices to accomplish these qualities in the relationship.

**Forgiveness** is not the same as *understanding*, giving credit for *good motives*, giving credit for "*trying their best*," or giving credit for *improvement*. If these were sufficient, Christ would not have had to die!

**Forgiveness** is the effective release of the Debt of Sin, which God grants you power and authority to accomplish with Him, regardless of what the other person does or does not choose. Because **you** agree with God that the death payment of Jesus Christ is enough, they **no longer owe you** for their sin!

**“Apart from Me, you can do nothing!” —Jesus, John 15:5**

**“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me!” —Philippians 4:13**