

Portions On Forgiveness

Jesus commanded us as His disciples to forgive seventy times seven.

I. What forgiveness is not:

1. A feeling. Nobody ever feels like forgiving.
2. Pretending I was not hurt. Pretending and forgiving are not the same thing. God can heal hurt, not pretense.
3. Saying what the person did was not wrong.
4. Relieving the other person of his or her responsibility. We do not exonerate them from responsibility for their actions, but leave them to God who can ultimately hold them accountable. My forgiveness releases God to work in that person.

II. Forgiveness is a decision I make to obey God in getting my heart right with Him. It is:

1. **A decision**, even a hard decision. God has given us the choice to decide, even if our emotions are resisting. It is an act of our will, not our emotions.
2. **A decision I make**. I am the only one who can decide to forgive or else live with crippling consequences of unforgiveness.
3. **To obey God**. Forgiveness is not a suggestion. It is commanded.
4. **In getting my heart right with Him**. It is between God and me, not another person and me.

III. Consequences of the sin of unforgiveness

Our wrong reaction of unforgiveness is as bad as the wrong action of the offender.

1. Unforgiveness causes prayers not to be heard. *Psa. 66:18*
2. Unforgiveness will bring your spiritual life to a halt. *Isa. 59:2, 57:15*.
Do you want to hold on to the hurt and bitterness more than you want to go on with God?

IV. What forgiveness is:

1. A command, a choice, an act of the will (*Heb. 12:15*).
2. The key to moving mountains (*Mark 11:23-25*).
3. Who God is (*Psa. 86:5*). He wants us to be like our Father (*Rom. 8:29*).
4. The mark of radical love (*Luke 17:4, Jam. 2:8*). God did it first (*1 John 4:19*).
Faith works through love (*Gal. 5:6, 1 Cor. 13:2*).
5. Your only alternative to torment (*Mat. 18:33-35*).
6. Exercised to the degree you have been forgiven (*Eph. 4:32, Col. 3:12-13*).
7. The degree to which you want to be forgiven (*Mat. 6:12, 14-15*).
8. Having the mind of Christ (*Luke 23:34*).
9. A condition for worship (*Mat. 5:23-24*).
10. Not a one time act, but a lifestyle of staying right with God that has to be maintained (*Rom. 2:1*).
11. Forgiveness glorifies God.
12. Forgiveness does not keep "count" (*Mat. 18:21-22, Luke 17:3-4*).
13. Unforgiveness gives Satan a foothold (*2 Cor. 2:10-11, Eph. 4:26-27*).

V. How to know you have forgiven:

You can hear the offender's name and your blood pressure does not rise. You desire to affirm love to the person, communicate forgiveness, make restitution, and be reconciled (*1 John 3:18-19, 2 Cor. 2:8*).