

Foundations Lesson #17

Forgiveness

In Paul's letter to the Romans, he quotes Psalm 32 saying, "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him" (Romans 4:7-8). It is a **great** blessing to be forgiven by God, one He has freely bestowed upon all who have faith in Christ. But we are under obligation to give away what we have received (Matthew 10:8), so we must forgive others in the same way that God has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32).

I. the forgiveness of God

- being a part of the nature of God
 - Exodus 34:6-7 / Psalm 86:5 / Daniel 9:9 / Micah 7:18 / Jeremiah 5:1
- under the Old Covenant: provided by the blood of sacrificed animals
 - Genesis 3:21 / Leviticus 4:20, 26, 31, 35, 5:10, 13, 16, 18, etc.
- under the New Covenant: provided by the blood of Christ
 - John 1:29 / Ephesians 1:7 / Hebrews 9:26-28 / Matthew 26:28 / Hebrews 9:22
- as modeled by our Lord Jesus Christ
 - Luke 23:33-34a (see also: Romans 12:17-21 and Acts 7:59-60)
- received by those who turn to him
 - Psalm 32:3-5 / Mark 4:11-12 / II Chronicles 7:14 / I John 1:9

II. the great need for believers to forgive

- the parable of the unmerciful servant – Matthew 18:21-35
 - We must forgive others because of how lavishly God has forgiven us. – verses 23-27
 - Ephesians 1:7-8 / Ephesians 2:4-5 / Colossians 3:13
 - We must forgive others because of our testimony to the world. – verses 28-31
 - Acts 16:35-40
 - We must forgive others because of what God will do. – verses 32-35
 - Matthew 6:14-15 / Luke 6:37 / Mark 11:25
- other teachings of Jesus on forgiveness
 - Matthew 6:12 / Luke 11:4 / Luke 17:3-4
- the example of Joseph – Genesis 50:18-21

III. forgiveness explained

- Forgiveness is **not** making excuses for someone else's wrongdoing.
- Forgiveness is **not** a matter of denying the pain.
- Forgiveness takes place when we give up the right to say or feel "you owe me" because of what the other person did.
- If we have forgiven the offense, we won't curse it, nurse it, rehearse it, or reimburse it; we'll disperse it and let God reverse it.

IV. making sure true forgiveness has taken place

- five tests to help you determine if true forgiveness has taken place

- 1) Do you have a desire to bring it up again? to talk about it? When God forgives you, he has no desire to bring it up again.
- 2) Can you remember the incident without any negative feelings? What about talking about it? Do you have any anger? resentment? revenge? Spiritual healing is taking place when the instant replay of our victimization is playing in the theater of our mind and we have lost interest in watching it.
- 3) Can you thank God for the lessons learned in the pain? (see Romans 8:28)
- 4) Have you accepted your part of the blame for what took place?
- 5) Are you praying for those who hurt you? Do you have a desire to **bles**s the offenders? God wants to bless them.

- handling unforgiveness when we find it in our hearts