

Week #4 ***YIELD YOUR SINS TO GOD***: “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.”

Introduction:

The Forgiveness Factor

“Forgive us our debt as we forgive our debtors.” What we receive in forgiveness is proportional to what we give away. But what is forgiveness?

Websters’ 7th New Collegiate Dictionary states that the word “forgiveness” is “implying the giving up not only of any claim to requital or retribution but also of any resentment or desire for revenge.”

No pay-back.

No hard feelings.

Often we can work up the grudging decision to not pay back the one who has hurt us, but letting go of the resentment is a second phase that is more difficult to determine to do.

Our toddler grandson was asked to carry out a task. Groping to express his feelings, he burst out, “Can’t want to.” How often are we that honest with ourselves and with God? We can forgive, but will we?

In this prayer, God is asked to forgive us as we forgive others. We ask that He mete out to us with the same measuring unit we use with others.

This week we will be looking at Jesus’ teaching on forgiveness. As we measure our lives against the straight edge of His word, may we have the courage to deal honestly and willingly in the areas that are out of alignment.

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Day #2 Jesus' shed blood is the basis of the forgiveness of my sins.

"And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins." (Matt. 26:27 – 28 NIV)

1. Jesus poured out His blood to provide forgiveness from my sin. Do I intentionally and regularly accept God's forgiveness provided at such cost?

2. What prevents me from accepting Christ's forgiveness?

3. What changes need to occur so that I am regularly receiving forgiveness for my sins?

Thought for today:

"Jesus had the definite conception of His death on the cross as the basis of forgiveness of sin. The purpose of the shedding of His blood of the New Covenant was precisely to remove (forgive) sins." (A.T. Robertson, Robertson Word Pictures of the New Testament.) Let us be willing recipients.

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Day #3 My forgiveness is based on God's grace.

And Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he replied, "Say it, Teacher." "A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both." (Luke 7:40-42a)

1. The forgiveness of these debts was not on the basis of the individual's circumstances, but on the benevolent nature of the moneylender. Recall one time when you have seen God's benevolence and grace at work in your life.

2. In your relationship with others, are you a "big" forgiver or a "stingy" one? Why?

Thought for the Day:

Jesus had just been anointed by a "sinful" woman as a demonstration of her love for Him. He used this illustration of the debtors to point out to Simon that the debtor that owed the small amount was as helpless as the other. We are all insolvent. Forgiveness is the only hope of sinners.

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Day #4 God's forgiveness reflects His compassion.

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. (Matt. 18:23-27)

The king is so moved by compassion that he did far more than was asked and forgave the entire debt. Matthew 18: 28 - 35 gives the rest of the story. This servant forces someone who owes him a small debt into prison. When the king hears about this harsh treatment by someone on whom he had shown compassion, he sends him to prison for his lack of compassion and forgiveness.

1. What role should compassion play in forgiveness?
2. Can you forgive without compassion?
3. What does this say to us as we pray "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"?

Thought for the Day:

We need daily divine forgiveness in order to enjoy perfect fellowship with our heavenly Father. Likewise, we need to extend forgiveness to the penitent who requests it. Jesus directs, "And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him." (Luke 17:4).

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Day # 6 If we want forgiveness, we must also extend forgiveness.

"Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions." (Mark 11:25-26)

1. What is the relationship between prayer and forgiveness in this passage?
2. Do I have unanswered prayer because I have not forgiven someone?
3. Do you have a memory of a time when you forgave someone and then the answers to prayer began to flow?

Thought for the Day:

“Evidently God’s willingness to forgive is limited by our willingness to forgive others. This is a solemn thought for all who pray.”(A. T. Robertson, Robertson’s Word Pictures of the New Testament).

