

## Podcast Episode Notes

### Season 3 Episode 3 Forgiveness: Don't Feel Like It

It's rare to find someone who likes to forgive. We feel justified in refusing to forgive someone. They wronged us! Or we feel they aren't sufficiently contrite. Often, it's easier to hold onto unforgiveness, than to humble ourselves and forgive. How do we really do it? And how do we know if we have?

- All of us have been sinned against and have experienced pain in our lives.
- Pain tempts us to execute revenge on those who have wronged us.
- Unforgiveness is like a disease that consumes us from the inside out until it kills us.
- Unforgiveness also hinders our walk with God and others (Mt. 6:14-15).
- Unforgiveness opens the door to bitterness, rage and anger in our lives (Eph. 4:31-32).
- Jesus died not only so we could be forgiven, but also so we might forgive others.
- Forgiveness is the ripping up of the "I owe you" of the heart.
- God's heart is to "settle accounts" — He desires us to walk in right relationship with Him and with the people in our lives. He has provided a way for us to do so through forgiveness (Mt. 18:23).
- When it comes to holding unforgiveness within our own hearts, we must remember how much we have been forgiven by God. In this parable there is a contrast between the millions of dollars owed by the slave who had been forgiven, and the fellow servant who owed literally just a few dollars (vv. 28-33).
- Unforgiveness keeps people in prison in their hearts where they will feel bound and tortured (v. 34).
- We must forgive people from our hearts (v. 35).
- Jesus gives us grace to forgive others—to forgive beyond what we think we are able (Mt. 18:21-22).
- Forgiveness means to release or set free. It is used of the cancellation of a debt, of release from a legal obligation. In general, we can say that *forgiveness is a conscious decision on the part of the offended party to release the offender from the penalty and guilt of the offense committed*. This release not only frees the offender from guilt and punishment, but it also frees the forgiver of anger and bitterness.
- Forgiveness is not free. Sin must always have a price that is paid. But forgiveness is the decision on the part of the offended to suffer the penalty due the offender. If a banker pardons a loan, it means that the borrower does not have to repay his debt, but it also means that the lender suffers the loss of the money loaned and not repaid.
- A Warning - The Bible says that our worship loses substance without forgiveness. When speaking with his disciples, Jesus said that if you decide to make an offering at a church you should put your life on hold and tie up loose ends in your life beforehand. "First go and be reconciled to your brother," he recommends, "then come and offer your gift (Matthew 5:24)." Thus, forgiveness is worthless if it is constantly delayed.

Forgiveness doesn't mean that you deny the other person's responsibility for hurting you, and it doesn't minimize or justify the wrong. You can forgive the person without excusing the act. Forgiveness brings a kind of peace that helps you go on with life.

Forgiveness is a decision to let go of resentment and thoughts of revenge. The act that hurt or offended you may always remain a part of your life, but forgiveness lessens its grip on you, freeing you to follow Jesus.

Biblical definition of forgiveness: In the Old Testament there are three words relating to God's forgiveness. One means "to cover"; another means "to lift away"; and the third means "to send away." In the New Testament the word for forgiveness means to "let go" or "send away."

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Forgiveness can lead to feelings of understanding and compassion towards the one who hurt you. "Hurt people hurt others".

*"Forgiveness is to set a prisoner free, and to realize the prisoner was you."* – Corrie Ten Boom, a Christian woman who survived a Nazi concentration camp in World War 2

Practical things related to forgiveness:

- Remember what we have been forgiven from. (see Matthew 18:23-33)
- Following Jesus' lead on the cross by forgiving even when you are not asked to forgive.
- Ultimately, the one who sinned against you is responsible to/accountable to God.
- Forgiveness triggers freedom – for both them and you.
- It restores relationship, and community in the Body of Christ. The Church is "the fellowship of the forgiven"!

Forgiveness doesn't guarantee reconciliation or restoration of relationship. There's a difference between forgiving someone and being restored relationally.

For more on this subject, check out Chapter 4 in *A Discipleship Journey*, Lionshare's primary tool for discipleship [here](#) and RT Kendall's book "Total Forgiveness"