

Lesson 33
The Importance of Forgiveness
Col 3:12-14

Col 3:12-14 12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. NIV

DO you find it difficult to forgive others for their infractions against you?

I. The Significance of Forgiveness:

- a. Offenses, slights, abuse, etc at the hands of others will be **common daily** occurrences. Matt 6:12-15
- b. When they occur they create a type of **debt** that must either be paid or forgiven.
- c. The one who holds the power to forgive is the one to whom the debt is **owed**.
- d. The model for how these debts are to be dealt with by the believer is **God Himself**.
- e. **How you** handle forgiveness of others is an indication of whether or not you have received forgiveness from God. Matt 18:23-35
- f. There is **no limit** as to the seriousness or frequency of offenses against us that we must be prepared to forgive. Mark 11:25-26; Matt 18:22

II. The Keys to Forgiving

- a. Practicing such magnanimous forgiveness requires one to be properly clothed **before** the offense occurs: chosen, holy and dearly beloved and forgiven.
- b. **COMPASSION**: literally a feeling with and for others, is a fundamental and distinctive quality of the Biblical conception of God. I.E. His pity and mercy, Ps 78:38;
 1. In Jesus Christ, in whom God was "manifest in the flesh," compassion was an outstanding **character trait**. Matt 9:36; 14:14
 2. Jesus taught that forgiveness ought to be extended, not to friends and neighbors only, but to all without exception, even to **enemies**. Matt 5:43-48;
- b. **KINDNESS**: means "usefulness," "beneficence," and is related to gentleness, goodness and love of mankind. Eph 2:7; Acts 28:2
- c. **HUMILITY** Jesus not only strongly impressed His disciples with the need for humility, but was in Himself its supreme example. Phil 2:7-9
 1. He described Himself as "meek and lowly in heart" (Matt 11:29). The first of the Beatitudes was to "the **poor in spirit**". Matt 5:3
 2. Humility is the way to true spiritual greatness. To the **humble mind** truth is revealed. Matt 11:25;18:4
- d. **GENTLENESS** "to bend low," "to condescend," to not assert ones' rights. Ps 18:35; Acts 24:4
- e. **PATIENCE**: implies suffering, enduring or waiting, as a determination of the will and not simply under necessity.
 1. We need to "wait patiently" for God; endure **uncomplainingly** the various forms of sufferings, wrongs and evils, and to bear injustices patiently.
- f. **FORBEARANCE**: "a holding back" is ascribed to God. Rom 2:4, 3:25
- G. **love**, binds all of these attributes together in perfect unity and covers the multitude of grievances we experience at the hands of others. 1 Peter 4:8; Prov 17:9

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Summary

- a. When taken together, these characteristics paint a picture of one who is not dominated by the **natural desire** to protect and to revere the self.
- b. This is one who has **humbled** himself under the mighty hand of God and who sees himself as the one who is chief among sinners.
- c. He can think of no one whose sin and nothing that has been done to him that is greater in magnitude than that which he has **actively committed** against God.
- d. Nonetheless, he has been **freely forgiven**, cleansed and given a place in the household and family of the very God whom he has offended.

Application

- a. Who is there in your life that you need to forgive?
- b. Categorize his/her offenses against you:

Minor slights in → grievances → wrongs → wounds → egregious sins
word or deed

- c. Is his/her sin against you greater than your act of nailing Christ to the cross?
- d. What do you need to do to make yourself right with God in this relationship?

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- b. When they occur they create a type of _____ that must either be paid or forgiven.
- c. The one who holds the power to forgive is the one to whom the debt is _____
- d. The model for how these debts are to be dealt with by the believer is _____
- e. _____ handle forgiveness of others is an indication of whether or not you have received forgiveness from God. Matt 18:23-35
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II. The Keys to Forgiving

- a. Practicing such magnanimous forgiveness requires one to be properly clothed _____ the offense occurs: chosen, holy and dearly beloved and forgiven.
- b. _____: literally a feeling with and for others, is a fundamental and distinctive quality of the Biblical conception of God. I.E. His pity and mercy, Ps 78:38;
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