

## FORGIVENESS

Today's lesson was specifically requested, with the emphasis on how to forgive when one has been personally wronged, rather than the aspect of sins against God and the Truth which we unitedly represent. (See F-Study IX "The Judgement of the New Creation, sub-headings "If thy Brother Trespass Against Thee" vs. "Offenses Against the Church")

Daniel 9:9 "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him."

Psa. 86:5, 15 "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy into all them that call upon thee."

"But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth."

Points:

Ready to forgive.

Mercies.

Compassion.

Gracious.

Longsuffering.

Jesus related these same concepts for us:

Matt. 5:7 "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy."

Matt. 6:12,14,15 "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also

forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Basics:

We have learned that we (and all others), are all shapened and born in iniquity, as offspring of Adam and Eve.

That we can have forgiveness through our:

1. Repentance.
2. Our acceptance of Jesus as the basis of our forgiveness by God.
3. Our willingness to forgive those that have trespassed against us.
4. That the New Creature, the new mind, does not sin, but our old man, the fallen flesh with it's old habits of thought continues to fail or sin I Jno. 1:8-10. Roms. 7:15-25.
5. Hence the daily, continual need of forgiveness.
6. And therefore, a daily reminder for us to be merciful and forgiving to others.

Matt. 18:15, 16. This implies that the erring or offending brother does not offer an apology or repentance, but at least a cessation of the wrong even if an apology is not forth coming (Rpt. 5409).

Matt. 18:21, 22 with Lu. 17:3, 4.

Points:

1. Communication.
2. Most often we can just forgive without even bringing it up. Love covers a multitude of sins.

3. If we observe that we are seeming to have a lot more experiences than other brethren with being offended or hurt, it probably has something to do with ourselves. Too, sensitive, defensive or having unreasonable expectations of others.
4. Unlimited forgiveness. Would we like God to only give us certain amount of times to be forgiven?
5. An attitude ready to forgive, only being withheld due to either the seriousness of the wrong or an otherwise problematic situation (more to come).

The problem of forgiving those who do not repent and might even be an enemy.

Luke 6:35-37 –

Points:

1. We are not to ignore serious offenses. Not good for ours' or their characters.
2. We cannot read the heart, or be sure of another's motive.
3. The Lord is keeping track of all injustices and He will mete out the exact and perfect punishment or chastisement as He sees fit, and that in due time. This is actually a GREAT relief to us.
4. We are never to be unkind, although at times our lack of warmth or comradery might be construed as such.
5. We are not to treat enemies like we treat our friends, otherwise we might very well be encouraging wrong behavior.
6. All that being said, it is undoubtedly more pleasing to God and Jesus for us to err on the side of being too quick to forgive some.
7. Resentment, the mental/emotional wound that does not heal but rather becomes infected.

This condition is that which is extremely injurious to the Christian. It quite often has its start as a sense of righteous indignation, however, the difference is that righteous indignation is focused on the sin and not the sinner, it causes us to take appropriate action and then leave the results with the Righteous Judge. Resentment sets in when we become personally defensive.

Resentment generally involves developing a series of negative thoughts. It starts to darken other thoughts toward the person(s), and can easily involve evil surmising and even evil speaking.

A typical element of resentment is anger. If someone finds themselves quite often harboring resentful thoughts, then a good place to start to correct this habit of thought is to try to correct the underlying mental attitude of anger.

Anger that was developed at an early age quite often has been masked over in our thoughts because it is painful. This makes it very difficult to identify and hence root out for several reasons, some being:

1. A long established habit of thinking. That is, it comes naturally to our fallen mind.
2. We have created numerous circumstantial supports for our being angry.
3. We can have legitimate reasons for the initial anger, but instead of a mentally healthy way of having let these hurtful thoughts and memories fade away, we have rather reinforced the anger, hashing it over and over in our minds many years later.

It is only with great effort can one correct the matter. But this is where we are eternally blessed in that we can and MUST leave it all with our God. ALL wrongs will be righted in due time.

We have been blessed with a wonderful understanding of the DPA, with it's Permission of Evil, Free Moral Agency, The Restitution of All Things, the influence of fear upon all, the influence of superstition, the fear of being rejected, the fear of being left behind, the fear of insecurity, the fear of loneliness, the fear of being misunderstood, misrepresented, fear, fear, fear.

Perfect love casts out fear, because fear hast torment.

We are to use this knowledge of the DPA to chisel away at any and all angry, fearful thoughts we might harbor. And sad to say, we might have harbored such thoughts for so long that we do not even realize it. This where our education in the Word of God assists us. We transform our minds by education our consciences, from the Word. Then we can better identify our underlying anger, fear, selfishness sentiments. Then we can identify what habits of thought are a result of these negative influences. This will take great humility on our part as we admit (to ourselves before God), that the way we have been thinking is flawed! The beauty of this is the God and Jesus already know how flawed our thinking is, it is not a revelation to them, it is a revelation to us! They long for us to take these steps in correcting our thought patterns, and do/will rejoice at every step of realization and progress in rooting out such painful and long held patterns of thinking.

II Cor. 10:4, 5 "For the weapon of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down reasoning's and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

These two verses are encapsulating the essence of what we have been trying to explain. We are not to use FALLEN human reasoning processes any longer, we are not to use the worldly wisdom of selfishness and

fears. Our old entrenched habits of thought are indeed strongholds or fortresses, every seemingly circumstantial evidence becomes an “aha!” moment and only further convinces us that our suspicions are right. However, the Word of God and His holy spirit which influences our new way of thinking and reasoning can indeed rout out all these powerful influences.

To bring every thought (that is every wayward, improper thought) into subject to Christ-like thinking, is the greatest battle we face. It is a Civil war inside of ourselves.

Another very powerful weapon is that when we challenge a thought or a feeling we are having, we can compare it to the holy standard/example of Jesus.

We can then say to ourselves something as simple as “Lord you know I do not want to think like that”, or “No! I am NOT going down that road!”.

This INTERRUPTS the thought process, right as it is happening and then we have the opportunity to exchange the wrong, negative, destruction old habit of thinking with the new, regenerate thought process, using all the knowledge of God’s dealings and our own struggles against sin that will allow our minds to be more generous, forgiving, merciful and longsuffering. Giving the benefit of the doubt to others, just like we would like them to do for us.

There are many good motives for us to make such strenuous efforts in the transforming of our minds.

1. God and Jesus appreciate seeing this in us.
2. We become better in all our relationships.
3. We elevate our internal positive attitudes = clarity.
4. We improve our physical/mental/emotional health.

5. We can become more productive at every level because we are wasting less time in endless cycles of self -destructive habits.

Another possible impediment one might have in not being forgiving is a lack of self-esteem. How could this be? When someone has low self-esteem they can unconsciously put undue importance upon someone else's opinion of them. This can create a very fertile, mental condition to breed resentment. As peculiar as it may seem, quite often people with low self-esteem can act with great self-confidence.

Self-esteem refers to how you feel about yourself overall, or what you think other people think of you. It relates to your perception that you and have value in this world. It also relates to whether or not you think OTHER people feel you have value in this world.

Self-confidence relates to how you view your abilities, and this can vary from situation to situation.

Example: you can have healthy self-esteem but low self-confidence in performing math equations.

Example: Andre Agassi had great self-confidence in his ability to play great tennis, but he struggles in life with anxiety.

Self-confidence is easier to develop. One can be lousy at some task, like swimming, but with lessons and practice you can learn to swim, even if you are not great at it, you have developed self-confidence that you can at least do it OK.

However, self-esteem is not task specific, rather it is an overall sense of worth, value. If self-esteem is not nurtured in childhood, it becomes very difficult to develop it later in life, not impossible though. And I submit that in becoming a Child of God and a footstep follower of Jesus Christ and learning through the contemplative study of the Word of God with His Plan of the Ages, that ALL whom He Calls with the High

Calling, have the best opportunity to cultivate a true, honest and sincere sense of self-esteem, a sense of value as a New Creature, regardless of what our Old Man tells us and regardless of what others may say or do to us.

As they are different, they too are related. Healthy self-esteem should include humility, which will hinder pride and which in turn will keep self-confidence from becoming arrogance.

To read about proper self-esteem in the Harvest Message see

Rpts. 5113 “Self-Esteem’s Advantages And Drawbacks”,

Rpt. 5520 “There are some of the Lord’s children who possess only a small amount of self-esteem and who therefore would be inclined to be too severe in their judgments of themselves, and hold themselves to the strictest account for every imperfection.”

Rpt. 3136 “...others, faint-hearted and weak, would need aid, support, encouragement, naturally backward, diffident, lacking in combativeness and self-esteem, they need to be pushed to the front a little, in order to bring out what talents they rally possess, for their own encouragement and for the blessing also of the entire household of faith.”

And summarizing this point on low self-esteem possibly impeding our ability to forgive, it is a worthy goal to continually strive to have the heavenly Father’s opinion of us as our chief concern, and not what our fellow human may think.

Matt. 18:21-35 Read.

Points:

1. Compassion.
2. God forgave us all, what can be done to us by fellow man that can compare to our lost estate?



3. It is the servants (Spirit-begotten), not the world on trial now.
4. Forgiveness from the heart = sincerely, really. However, some offenses might be either very painful or had been repeated, so that while one sincerely forgives, there can be a loss of fullness of confidence due to the flesh and hence a proper reserve, at least for a time.

So then:

1. Deal with any underlying anger.
  2. Put away resentment.
  3. Balanced and proper self-esteem.
  4. Putting and keeping God's estimation of us first and foremost.
  5. Studying to keep the DPA with all of the Truth Concepts clearly before our minds.
  6. Studying ourselves to better know what motives generate our feelings.
  7. Remembering our continual need of God's mercy and forgiveness.
  8. Exchanging improper, resentful thoughts with proper compassionate thoughts.
  9. Cultivating the fruits of the spirit and soundness of mind.
  10. Being ready to forgive.
- End.

