

# The Principle of Forgiveness

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(Proverbs 19:11, NKJV) The discretion of a man defers his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.

(Proverbs 19:11, GodsWord) A person with good sense is patient, and it is to his credit that he overlooks an offense.

Whether the offense is big or small, forgiveness is a process that only God can accomplish in us. Forgiveness is beyond us – it is the work of God in us.

Overlooking a transgression/offense is to look beyond the offense.

As we forgive, we bring glory to God, for we are never more like God than when we forgive.

## The Principle of Forgiveness

Throughout the Scriptures we are taught three basic principles of forgiveness:

1. Forgive those that sin against us/offend us.
2. Forgive and be forgiven
3. Do not forgive and you will not be forgiven

## Forgive Those That Offend Us

We pray because we need God's help to forgive people that offend us.

(Matthew 6:12) And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

(Matthew 18:21-22) Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? (22) Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

It is not easy to forgive people that offend us. Nevertheless, we need to forgive others if we want the Lord to forgive us. When we forgive others, we are showing witness that the power of God is working in our life.

## Forgive and Be Forgiven

(Matthew 6:14) For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

(Luke 6:37) Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.

All of us are sinners, and we need for God to forgive us. If we do not forgive others, then we are rejecting God's forgiveness of us.

(Ephesians 4:32) And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

(Colossians 3:13) Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

## No Forgiveness Equals No Forgiveness

If we will not forgive others, then God will not forgive us.

(Matthew 6:15) But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

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(Mark 11:25) And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

(Matthew 5:23-24) Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; (24) Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

If a person becomes angry and bitter because someone offended them, then prayer is impossible. God wants us to deal with our relationships with others first, then develop our relationship with Him.

For a person to pray while bearing a grudge is like a tree sprouting leaves and bearing no fruit (Mark 11:13). True faith changes the heart. Real prayer dismantles pride and vengeance, filling the holes with love. Real faith seeks peace. For our churches to have prayer power, there must be harmony and forgiveness evident in the body of believers. **Let go of hurts, abandon grudges, and forgive others.**

## Two Parables on Forgiveness

Jesus reminds us of the practice of forgiveness through parables. In two parables Jesus points us to forgive like God and not like man. Someone has said, "We are never more like God than when we can forgive others."

The Prodigal Son and the Forgiving Father. Forgiving like God.

(Luke 15:18-20) I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, (19) And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. (20) And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

The Unforgiving Servant. He was forgiven of a debt of ten thousand talents, yet he would not forgive someone of a debt of 100 pence. Unforgiving like man.

(Matthew 18:26-30) The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. (27) Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. (28) But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. (29) And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. (30) And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

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