

FORGIVENESS AND FORGIVING

May 13, 2012 Ephesians 4:32-5:2 by Bob Branch
Discovering Our Inheritance in Christ, Part 16

MAIN IDEA: Forgiving is a mandate for everyone who has been forgiven by God. Today, look at ¹ God's side of Forgiveness (briefly), ² how that applies to us, and then ³ how to effectively forgive.

³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, **forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.** ¹ Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children ² and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. **Ephesians 4:32-5:2**

GOD'S SIDE OF FORGIVENESS

Why does God need to forgive you? Justice Side: SIN. (Eph. 2:1-3)

...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God **Romans 3:23**

Why Does God forgive? The love-side. Motivated by love.

God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **Romans 5:8** (see vs. 6-8)

How does God forgive you? Costly. He paid your debt himself.

He personally carried the load of our sins in his own body when he died on the cross **1 Peter 2:24 LB**

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. **Isaiah 53:5-6** (2 Cor. 5:21)

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner & need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died for my sins. I want to turn from my sins. I now invite You to come into my heart and life. I trust you and want to follow You as Lord and Savior. In Your name. Amen.

OUR-SIDE OF FORGIVENESS

Like God, it starts with us. We take the initiative to forgive.

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, **Christ died** for the ungodly. **Romans 5:6** (See also v. 8)

Like God, it costs you. We pay the price ourselves.

For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom he paid was not mere gold or silver. It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. **1 Peter 1:18-19 NLT**

Like God, You erase the offense. Let go of it. A heart transaction.

...forgive your brother or sister from your heart. **Matthew 18:35**

FORGIVING IN PRACTICE Steps of Forgiveness

Ask God to help you. You will need it!

♦ **Confess the feelings of hurt, anger, & bitterness out loud to God**

Psalm 52; 53; 58; 59; 35; 69; 70; 83; 109; 137:7-9

Two modes can be effective:

To be honest to God with all the hatred, anger, vengeance and the like emptying our hearts before him of the poison inside. (Psalm 58)

"God, this is terrible. I hate them! I wish they would... and that..."

To speak to the person as if they are there, in the presence of God, and vent all the feelings out until they are done. (Psalm 52; 58; 10:2ff;) (a less-vocal approach: write a scathing letter, never mail it)

"You filthy slime-sucking maggot, ... etc."

♦ **Choose to forgive the person for *specific* offenses until done.**

Matthew 6:12, 14-15; 18:15-35; Colossians 3:13

Forgiveness is a choice, that leads your feelings... *"For _____, I choose to forgive you, and for _____, I choose to forgive you. (sigh...)"* and let the bitterness, and pain go.

Be as specific as possible. The more specific the confession the more thorough the cleansing (as a rule of thumb).

♦ **Ask God to forgive you for harboring bitterness specifically**

1 John 1:9

"Father, I see now, just how deeply I have sinned against you and _____, and I am guilty before you. Please forgive me. I have harbored murder in my heart toward _____,...."

♦ **Speak blessing over the person whom you forgave.**

Luke 6:28; Romans 12:14; 1 Cor. 4:12

"Lord, I speak my blessing over _____. I pray that you would bless them, and give them extra grace..."