



“Freedom in Forgiveness” Sun June 11, 2023

I. **Colossians 3:9-13**

A. **Forgive**

1. **Greek:** *To grant as a favor; that is, gratuitously, in kindness, pardon or rescue.*
2. **Dictionary:** *To Pardon; To Cease to feel resentment against for an offense, flaw, or mistake; to give up resentment of or claim to requital.*

B. **Forgiveness on 3 levels**

1. **Forgiveness from God (1 John 1:9)**
2. **Forgiveness toward others (James 5:16)**
3. **Forgiveness of yourself (Philippians 3:13)**
****It is impossible to live in the best of today if you are always living in the hurts of yesterday****

C. What it is...or better yet, what Forgiveness is not:

*****WHAT IT IS NOT*****

1. **Forgiveness is not a feeling.** If it were, we would never forgive others, because we would not “feel” like it.
2. **Forgiveness is not a weakness.** It takes a lot of strength to acknowledge pain, declare it, and forgive it.
3. **Forgiveness does not mean pretending it didn't happen and hiding from it.**
4. **Forgiveness does not mean forgetting.** The phrase “forgive and forget” is not Biblical. (Only God, who is a spirit, can forgive and forget...and thank God He does!).
5. **Forgiveness is not the same as reconciling.** Reconciliation may follow forgiveness, but we can forgive an offender without reestablishing a relationship.
6. **Forgiveness is not conditional.** It's not, “If you do this, then, and only then, will I forgive you.”

*****WHAT IT IS*****

1. **A Decision To Release.** (The first barrier is to release it from your mind. Refuse to dwell on the incident or the hurt that it has caused).
2. **A Decision to Embrace.** (When you forgive, you are embracing mercy and grace. Mercy and Grace is giving someone what they don't deserve.)
3. **A Decision to Pardon.** (When you forgive, you are letting go of your right to punish them for the offense in the future; you are saying, “I will not bring this incident up again and use it against you.”)

4. **Forgiveness is Divine** (In the natural, it is a mystery; how can anyone forgive a person that has done them wrong or for that matter, forgive themselves? It takes something greater than the natural....with God all things are possible).

II. Forgiveness in the church – Releasing the burdens we carry every day

A. We are the sheep of His pasture...isn't it time that we act like it?

1. People go to McDonald's and McDonald's messes up their order 50 times, but they keep going back, but if someone says one word that offends them in church, they don't ever go back!
2. The only reason we do not forgive: **We put greater value on the hurt than on the forgiveness that God gave us through Jesus!** (The basic answer: we are being deceived by our feelings – we should walk by faith/forgiveness not by sight!)

B. **Mark 11:25-26**

1. Is the un-forgiveness worth the consequences?
2. Did you know that when you hold onto an offense, you actually bring judgment upon yourself through the judgment that you are dishing out? (**Matthew 7:1-2**....God is not judging you; He took care of all judgment, condemnation, guilt, and shame on the cross – **John 12:31-32**).
3. The Model Prayer: *“Forgive us our debts AS WE FORGIVE...”*

C. Living Free and Clear of All Debts

1. The first and immediate thing you should do: Release it & Conceal It (Don't give it power by talking about it/Love covers the multitude of sins).
2. Forgiveness is a mystery because it is Divine. You make the choice and God brings the healing!
3. **Matthew 5:43-44** (Do you want to be called or chosen....Christian or Children?).
4. **It's time to release the pain....**
“Father, I come to you in the name of Jesus. I thank you for your blood; I thank you for your forgiveness. Right now, I release all bitterness, all un-forgiveness, all judgment toward everyone.....and Lord Jesus, I release un-forgiveness toward myself. If I am good enough in your eyes, that is enough for me. Thank you for healing me; thank you for delivering me; thank you for restoring me. This day I am free!”