



Rock Creek Baptist Church
Apr 29, 2018

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Worth It: Forgiveness

Giving and receiving forgiveness and
strategies to help

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Luke 15:11-32

Jesus continued: ‘There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, “Father, give me my share of the estate.” So he divided his property between them. ‘Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no-one gave him anything. ‘When he came to his senses, he said, “How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.” So he got up and went to his father. ‘But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms round him and kissed him. ‘The son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.” ‘But the father said to his servants, “Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” So they began to celebrate. ‘Meanwhile, the elder son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. “Your brother has come,” he replied, “and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.” ‘The elder brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, “Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!” ‘ “My son,” the father said, “you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be

glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.” ’

Do you relate to the younger son? (Accepted back with grace)

How about the older son? (Who feels this isn't fair)

Matthew 18:24-35

As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’ “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Matthew 6:12

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

When I forgive your debt, I don't make you pay for it

- 1) By bringing it up to you
- 2) By bringing it up to others
- 3) By purposely bringing it up in my mind to ruminate against you

It is hard to take hold of God's forgiveness with your hands clenched in a fist. Unforgiving hearts are not open to receive forgiveness themselves. We build up a wall between us and others and consequently block off our blessings too

Forgiveness does not depend on:
 The other person's attitude
 Our feelings
 Forgetting about it

Matthew 18:21-22

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

Matthew 18:15-17

"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

Romans 12:18

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

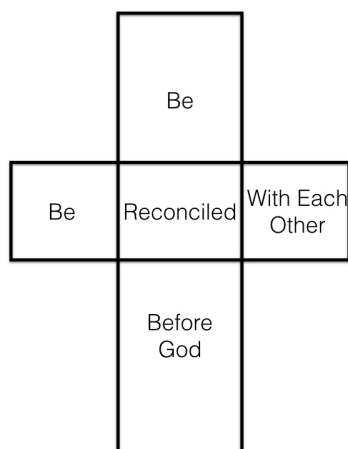
Mark 11:25

And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

Luke 17:3

So watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them.

We forgive them before God, and forgive them one on one



Story: Remember the duck!

What's done in the dark will come to light, it's best to confess sin immediately

Christian Author Gary Chapman lists 5 ways people best receive an apology:

- 1) Expressing Regret: I am genuinely sorry for what I've done
- 2) Accept Responsibility: Own up to what you've done without shifting blame
- 3) Making restitution: Clean up the mess you made
- 4) Repentance: I won't do that again, I'm turned in a new direction. Here, setting a plan in place is helpful
- 5) Asking for forgiveness: Can you forgive me? Cancel my debt, forgive my trespass?

Looking at this list, doesn't it seem like an apology could encompass more than one strategy within it so that your apology can be better heard and received? For example:

I did this thing _____, and I wish that I hadn't. How can I make this right with you? I want you to know that I won't do this again, and here's how you can know _____. Would you please forgive me for what I did?

There is no guarantee that you will be forgiven, or that they will feel good about it.

Story: Corrie Ten Boom and the church bell

Do you need to forgive someone today?

Do you need to seek forgiveness today?

Have you accepted Jesus' forgiveness of your sins on the cross?

Are you holding onto something in such a way that your clenched hands can't receive the gift?

If you don't have a church home, we invite you to join this loving family of people willing to roll up their sleeves and get involved in the "mess" of relationships together, because God said we're worth it.