

Rock Creek Baptist Church
Mar 4, 2018

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Choose Carefully What You "Pay Forward" - Exodus 20
Are you paying forward the bad that's been done to you by man or the boundless blessings given to you by God?

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Story: Man bitten by a dog
Cartoon: Who's responsible for this?



We have a tendency to pass forward the bad that was done to us.

Example: stomach bugs and symptoms in a family system (the one showing symptoms isn't the only one sick.)

Joseph recap of wrongs done to him: thrown in well, sold into slavery, falsely accused, forgotten by his friends.

Joseph's attitude is that God used this evil for good and he cares for his family instead of getting even.

Imagine the Egyptians who sold themselves into slavery to the Pharaoh watching these foreign Hebrews blessed by God and approved by Pharaoh. The tides turn in Exodus 1

Exodus 1:6-14

Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died, but the Israelites were exceedingly fruitful; they multiplied greatly, increased in numbers and became so numerous that the land was filled with them. Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt. "Look," he said to his people, "the Israelites have become far too numerous for us. Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country." So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites and worked them ruthlessly. They made their lives bitter with harsh labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their harsh labor the Egyptians worked them ruthlessly.

There is a real difference between the slavery the Egyptians chose for themselves and the slavery they subject God's people to.

Egyptians: move to government housing and pay a 20% tax

Israelites: be beaten, abused, and have everything taken from you

Background: Moses and the freeing of God's people (not only were they treated bad in captivity but they were hunted on the way out and attacked on the road by still more enemies!)

Exodus 20:3-17

“You shall have no other gods before me. “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. “You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you. “You shall not murder. “You shall not commit adultery. “You shall not steal. “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

The Ten Commandments fit into a few rules for how you relate to God and more rules for how you relate to others. In short, don't do to others the bad that was done to you. Act in these ways instead.

Instead of pagan religion, God says "not for my people." Instead of violent and manipulative relationships God says "not so for my people."

The Story of "Pay It Forward."

God calls the Israelites, and calls us, who have been freed, redeemed, cared for, to help the captives, lead them to the redemption found in Jesus, and care for them. Not to manipulate, malign, or wrong others. We are to choose carefully what we "pay forward."

Matthew 18:23-35

“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 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."

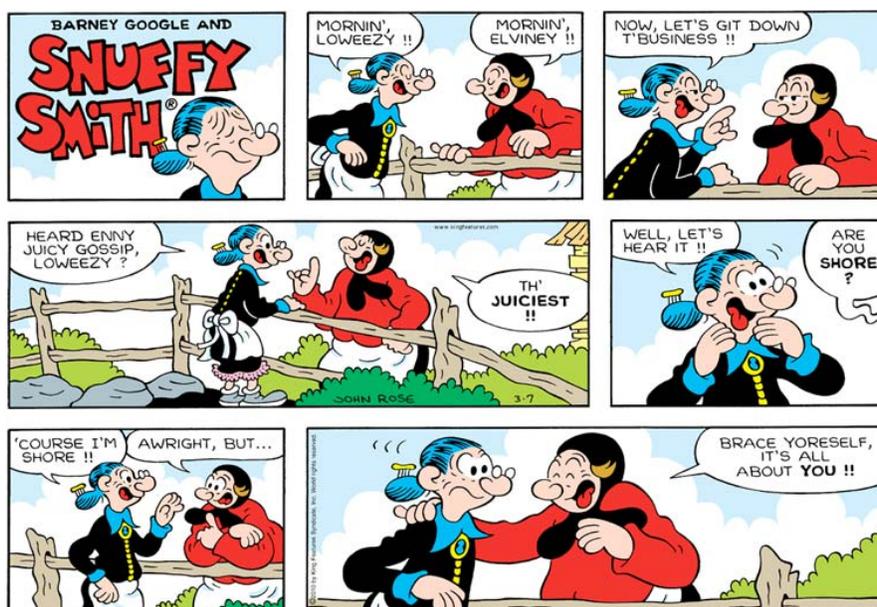
Have you been forgiven much? Forgive much. Given much grace? Give much grace. Even if you don't feel you've received good things from others, you can receive it from Jesus if you will open your heart to Him.

Ask yourself:

Have I become the kind of person that used to harass me?

Do I model for my children and grandchildren the behavior I want to see in them?

Do I gossip and speak falsely about others? (Cartoon: the gossip fence)



Matthew 22:34-40

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Love God with every fiber of your being and then pay forward that love to your fellow man.

Do not pay forward the evil that was done to you. Pay forward the countless blessings of God.