

Biblical Forgiveness

A Practical Model of Forgiveness

Introduction

- We have to this point surveyed how God forgives us because it is the basis for how we are to forgive others (Colossians 3:13, Ephesians 4:32)
- Today we will begin to build a model of forgiveness based on what we have seen.

Which Type of Forgiveness?

- In the previous lesson we established that there are two types of forgiveness employed by God:
 - Perpetual Forgiveness
 - This deals with salvation and is a one-time act.
 - Here our sin debt is atoned for by Christ, and we are declared righteous by God's decree
 - Incidental Forgiveness
 - This deals with our continuing struggle with sin.
 - This is an ongoing aspect of our salvation but does not affect our salvation.
 - Here we do not lose our status as cleansed, but we are washed of the sins that pollute our life.
- Which model is for us?
 - The two are intertwined but do have distinct roles in understanding forgiveness.
 - Perpetual Forgiveness is the foundation of our forgiveness towards others.
 - If God can forgive us and can forgive them, so can we forgive – Ephesians 4:32
 - This is the moral of the Parable of the Unjust Servant in Matthew 18:21-35
 - That servant had been forgiven so much yet refused to embrace the heart of forgiveness.
 - Incidental Forgiveness is the practice of our forgiveness toward others.
 - Because we are constantly sinning against others and they are constantly sinning against us, there is a need to be able to employ forgiveness as necessary.
 - This is seen in the question Peter asked in Matthew 18:21-22 and relates to someone who repeated sins against us and each time seeks forgiveness.
 - Christ countered the hard limit of forgiving 70 times by making it 70x7, practically stating that there is no limit.
 - Both of these models have the same goal - RECONCILIATION

Forgiveness Toward Others Based On God's Model

- Christians should live continually with:
 - A spirit of forgiveness – Matthew 5:7, Luke 6:27, Romans 12:18
 - A willingness to forgive – Ephesians 4:32
 - A spirit of forbearance – Ephesians 4:2
 - Webster's 1828 - "The exercise of patience; long suffering; indulgence towards those who injure us; lenity; delay of resentment or punishment."
- Our reaction to being hurt by others:
 - We must resist:
 - Becoming consumed with bitterness – Ephesians 4:31
 - Lashing out in retaliation – Romans 12:19
 - Gossip – Proverbs 26:20,22
 - We may:
 - We may seek justice and reconciliation if the other party fails to – Matthew 18:15-20
 - Sometimes we must initiate forgiveness ourselves because the other party does not understand why and how to find it.
 - The underlying principle of forgiveness is that the injured party sets the grounds for forgiveness.
 - We may seek counsel – Proverbs 24:6
 - We should:
 - Pray for them – Matthew 5:44
 - Continue to show kindness to them – Romans 12:21
- Actions of the injurer in seeking forgiveness:
 - The injurer is convicted of their sin and the need for forgiveness – Acts 2:37
 - The injurer confesses their sin – James 5:16
 - The injurer makes proper restitution (and more) – Numbers 5:5-7
 - The injurer repents – Acts 3:19
 - The injurer asks the victim for forgiveness – Matthew 5:23-24
 - This is as far as they can go as it is up to the victim to forgive.
 - The injurer asks God for forgiveness – Psalm 51:4
- Actions of the victim in giving forgiveness
 - The victim expresses forgiveness toward the injurer –
 - The victim restores their relationship with the injurer –
 - The victim releases the injurer from the guilt of their actions – Ephesians 4:31-32
 - The victim aids the injurer in overcoming their struggles to sin –