

Weapons Of Warfare

The Series Part 7

Forgiving Others & Remitting Sins

We learned in “Weapons of Warfare- Part 6: The Power Of Personal Forgiveness”, that the word “**Forgive**” is a very complex word, and has many meanings. We explored why the basic context of the word or implication meant “**Separation**.” We also learned that God is ready to forgive us/separate us from our sins through Jesus, if we ask, but we have to ask with repentance. The first part of this study is pretty standard teaching on forgiving others. Then we will move onto some controversial and often unheard of teaching concerning forgiving others and remitting sins.

THE CALL TO FORGIVE OTHERS

We must forgive to be forgiven. We have been forgiven by God through Jesus. We are expected to extend to others the same grace and mercy. Failure to do so can not only destroy the other person, it can also destroy you.

Colossians 3:12-14 “Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, (13) bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if someone happens to have a complaint against anyone else. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also forgive others. (14) And to all these virtues add love, which is the perfect bond.”

Matthew 6:14-15 “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. (15) But if you don’t forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Lance’s Paraphrase.

- If you **Separate** men from their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also **Separate** you from yours. But if you do not **Separate** men from their trespasses, neither will your Father **Separate** you from yours. -

✘ Unforgiveness Can Destroy A Person, and Make Them Never Able To Heal.

2 Corinthians 2:5-8 “But if any has caused sorrow, he has caused sorrow, not to me, but in part (that I not press too heavily) to you all. (6) This punishment which was inflicted by the many is sufficient for such a one; (7) so that on the contrary you should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his excessive sorrow. (8) Therefore I beg you to confirm your love toward him.”

✘ Unforgiveness Gives Power To The Devil!

2 Corinthians 2:10-11 “Now I also forgive whomever you forgive anything. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, (11) that no advantage may be gained over us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”

✘ Unforgiveness Will Hinder Your Unity With God.

Mark 11:25 “Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven will also forgive you your sins.”

✘ Unforgiveness Ensures You Will Be Condemned.

Luke 6:37 “Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven.”

Unforgiveness ultimately creates a roadblock between the union of the child of God and the Father. If you bind them up with unforgiveness, you are destroying the unity of the family. Our Father God desires unity and peace in His house and if at all possible, peace with the outside world.

Who are we to remember and hold over people what God has forgotten? Who are we to remind God of what He has determined to forget? From this we know why God will not forgive our sins if we don't forgive others of theirs. If we remind Him of what His children have repented of, there too will He also remember the sins of the one who wants to make a case against his brother.

✘ There Should Be No Limit To Our Forgiveness.

Luke 17:4 “If he sins against you seven times in the day, and seven times returns, saying, ‘I repent,’ you shall forgive him.”

IF YOU ARE THE OFFENDER, YOU MUST SEEK FORGIVENESS- ASAP

Failure to right a wrong and restore a relationship as much as possible from you is wrong. We must seek peace, unity, and forgiveness with each other. If we do not, it will hinder our walk with God.

Matthew 5:23-26 “So then, if you bring your gift to the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, (24) leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother and then come and present your gift. (25) Reach agreement quickly with your accuser while on the way to court, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge hand you over to the warden, and you will be thrown into prison. (26) I tell you the truth, you will never get out of there until you have paid the last penny!”

Some people do not want to restore and forgive you, so you do not need their forgiveness to continue on with God. But you must make the attempt. If they rebuff your attempt, then it is on their head and not yours.

Romans 12:18 "If it is possible, as much as it is up to you, be at peace with all men.

THE MECHANICS OF FORGIVING OTHERS

This section is controversial and not as simple as some would like it to be. Some want everything to be like a light switch- on or off. They want to avoid nuance and precision. Yet, that is exactly what we will need in this challenging section of the study and the section after this one.

Forgiving Others Follows the Same Format As Seeking Forgiveness From God.

Let us review so we know the process of forgiving others.

✘ We Receive The Power Of Forgiveness Through Repentance, Other do as well.

Acts 2:38 Peter said to them, "**Repent**, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the **forgiveness of sins**, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

✘ It Takes Admission Of Guilt And Confession. They should admit to receive.

Psalms 32:5 "**I acknowledged my sin to you**. I didn't hide my iniquity. I said, **I will confess my transgressions**

WHAT DOES JESUS SAY ON THE SUBJECT?

Luke 17:3-4 "Be careful. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him. **If he repents, forgive him.** (4) If he sins against you seven times in the day, and seven times returns, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."

This flies in the face of forgiving everyone just to forgive everyone. But we can clearly see that the layout follows the same process of finding forgiveness with God. The process remains the same within the corporate body.

Matthew 18:15-17 "If your brother sins against you, go, show him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained back your brother. (16) But if he doesn't listen, take one or two more with you, that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. (17) If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the assembly. If he refuses to hear the assembly also, let him be to you as a Gentile or a tax collector."

WE WILL COVER THIS MORE LATER ON.

So as we see here, if the offending party does not seek forgiveness, you are not obligated to give it to them. You can continue on with God. If you have made the attempt to restore and they refuse to restore, then it is on their head and not your own.

✘ Turn Them Over To God

Romans 12:18-19 "If it is possible, as much as it is up to you, be at peace with all men. (19) Don't seek revenge yourselves, beloved, but give place to God's wrath. For it is written, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay, says the Lord."

In reality, only God can truly forgive the sin. We can forgive, or release or separate, the act from the actor in our own dealings. Yet, sin is still sin and they will have to answer for it to God. To say we forgive is really just turning them over to God, to do as He sees fit. So while personally forgiving a person lets them out of our own debt, it does not let them out of the debt owed to God for the act. As we know the wages for sin is death, all acts have a corresponding price or reward. So while we are free to do what we want, it is not without a price. Either Good or Evil will always produce a payable fruit.

We will cover "Remitting Sins" later on.

WHAT ABOUT THE BURDEN OF UNFORGIVENESS?

What most people call unforgiveness is actually hatred and murder in their hearts.

The Bible does not say to forgive without repentance, as God does not forgive without repentance. Yet, it is wise to move on in life. Some harbor what we call un-forgiveness towards people who have harmed them. When in reality, this is hatred and murder in their hearts.

Ephesians 4:26-27 "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: (27) Neither give place to the devil."

1 John 3:15 "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him."

Matthew 5:21-22 "You have heard that it was said to the ancient ones, 'You shall not murder;' and 'Whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.'" (22) But I tell you, that everyone who is angry with his brother without a cause will be in danger of the judgment; and whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' will be in danger of the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of Gehenna."

If They Have Asked For Forgiveness, You Are Not Permitted To Retain Unforgiveness.

This distinction must be made plain. We can let go of the hurt and trauma, without carrying the burden within our souls to avenge ourselves. This can be done without "Forgiving Them". True spiritual maturity is to feel no ill will towards the offender, yet being wise as a serpent and understanding the nature of the person. This helps us to understand how to interact with them in the future. Would it be un-forgiveness if someone who stole from you never repented? Then you stopped trusting them as a result? No, that is common sense, they are an unrepentant thief. Do you have to bear a grudge and wish them harm over it? NO! You can release it to the Lord and walk with wisdom and peace. We do not have to forgive someone to live without malice and intent to exact punishment. Yet, to walk with murder in your heart, bearing hatred and malice, is beyond not forgiving someone. Also to forgive does not mean you will forget a memory nor never have an emotion over it. You are just releasing them of the debt and moving on with life. We can forgive yet have a hard time forgetting. This is normal.

Here we see the complex story play out. The person sins, the individual who was sinned against turns the offender over to be punished. They were unforgiven. God was okay with it. Yet, He says that if they change their heart and seeks forgiveness, then we are obligated to extend it.

1 Kings 8:46-50 “If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; (47) Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; (48) And so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name: (49) Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, (50) And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them:”

WHAT ABOUT MERCY AND GRACE?

While we are not obligated to hold unforgiveness, you can also forgive when no repentance is present. Much like you are not obligated to forgive if they do not repent. There is a difference of forgiving through repentance, and forgiving someone who has no repentance for what they did. By restoring a relationship based upon repentance, and not restoring a relationship when no repentance is present. Yet, still releasing them in forgiveness from the wrong they committed. Ending the matter concerning the offense, yet the relationship is never restored, while retaining the option to restore at your discretion in the future. So, what guidance can we find concerning showing mercy and grace?

➡ Seek Peace Whenever It Is Possible.

Romans 12:18-21 “If it is possible, as much as it is up to you, be at peace with all men. (19) Don’t seek revenge yourselves, beloved, but give place to God’s wrath. For it is written, “Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay, says the Lord.” (20) Therefore “If your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in doing so, you will heap coals of fire on his head.” (21) Don’t be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

➡ We Are Called To Act Christ-like No Matter What.

Proverbs 25:21-22 “If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat. If he is thirsty, give him water to drink: (22) for you will heap coals of fire on his head, and Yahweh will reward you.”

➡ Exhibit The Fruits Of The Spirit At All Times.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 “Love is patient and is kind; love doesn’t envy. Love doesn’t brag, is not proud, (5) doesn’t behave itself inappropriately, doesn’t seek its own way, is not provoked, takes no account of evil; (6) doesn’t rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; (7) bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

Matthew 5:38-45 “You have heard that it was said, ‘*An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.*’ (39) But I say to you, do not resist the evildoer. But whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other to him as well. (40) And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your coat also. (41) And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two. (42) Give to the one who asks you, and do not reject the one who wants to borrow from you. (43) “You have heard that it was said, ‘*Love your neighbor*’ and ‘hate your enemy.’ (44) But I say to you, love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you, (45) so that you may be like your Father in heaven, since he causes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

WHAT ABOUT OFFENSES OF IGNORANCE?

In the sight of God, there are sins of ignorance. Much in the same way people can offend us or sin against us completely unaware that they have made a trespass. How then should we act? Follow the guidelines of Matthew 18:15-20, if it is major. But if it is slight, then maybe we should handle in the following manner:

✘ There Is A Sin Of Ignorance- Jesus Gives This Example Here:

John 15:22 “If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have had sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.”

John 9:41 “Jesus replied, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin, but now because you claim that you can see, your guilt remains.”

✘ Jesus Is Our Example:

1 Peter 2:21-22 “For to this you were called, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving an example for you to follow in his steps. (22) He committed no sin nor was deceit found in his mouth.”

✘ So If Jesus Christ Was The Example Left To Us, Then What Is The Example He Gave Us Concerning Forgiveness Of Sins Of Ignorance?

Luke 23:33-34 “So when they came to the place that is called “The Skull,” they crucified him there, along with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. (34) [But Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.”] Then they threw dice to divide his clothes.”

✘ We Find In The Bible Even More Guidelines:

Proverbs 19:11 “The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger. It is his glory to overlook an offense.”

Matthew 7:12 “In everything, treat others as you would want them to treat you, for this fulfills the law and the prophets.”

Proverbs 24:29 “Don’t say, “I will do to him as he has done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.”

Ecclesiastes 7:9 “Don’t be hasty in your spirit to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools.”

1 Thessalonians 5:15 “See that no one returns evil for evil to anyone, but always follow after that which is good, for one another, and for all.”

We do not have to take offense. We can overlook the matter. We do not have to build a wall of hurts. We can take the hit and move on in life. If we feel that it is ill will, continue to follow Matthew 18:15-20.

REMITTING SINS

Please Take Note Of The Group Meeting.

John 20:19-23 “On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the disciples had gathered together and locked the doors of the place because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” (20) When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. (21) So Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. Just as the Father has sent me, I also send you.” (22) And after he said this, he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit. (23) If you forgive anyone’s sins, they are forgiven; if you retain anyone’s sins, they are retained.”

Unlike the Catholic Church and the priests who think they can actually forgive sins, and that they are needed for this to be accomplished, we understand the truth. We also reject this perversion of the intent of the calling to remit sins. We are only ambassadors to bring those called by Jesus to Jesus, so He can do the completion of the forgiveness work. Yet, we have the authority to alleviate sin burdens and barriers that the devil tries to use to prevent the reception of forgiveness by the offender. Meaning that we are called to set the table of forgiveness and coordinate the particulars of the meeting of God and man. We do not have to do it for the people to find forgiveness; we are just expediting the process. As believers in good standing before the Lord, we welcome those seeking good standing with the encouragement and promise of finding complete forgiveness- the earthly hand guiding the lost into the heavenly realm.

Here Again We See This Same Principle Play Out:

Again, Please Take Note Of The Group Meeting.

Here We Find As The Church: Sins Can Be Bound And Released In Heaven.

Matthew 18:15-20 “If your brother sins against you, go, show him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained back your brother. (16) But if he doesn’t listen, take one or two more with you, that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. (17) If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the assembly. If he refuses to hear the assembly also, let him be to you as a Gentile or a tax collector. (18) Most certainly I tell you, whatever things you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever things you release on earth will have been released in heaven. (19) Again, assuredly I tell you, that if two of you will agree on earth concerning anything that they will ask, it will be done for them by my Father who is in heaven. **(20) For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the middle of them.**”

So as we can see this principle is clearly laid out in scripture. It appears to centrally located within the church, done with multiple parties involved. The Body of Christ and bind and loose sin debts: sustaining or alleviating the barrier that sin produces between God and man and man to his fellowman. Ultimately it is up to God, and we should always forgive when it is sought out. Yet the NT lays out there is a time to turn people over to Satan.

1 Corinthians 5:3-5 “For even though I am absent physically, I am present in spirit. And I have already judged the one who did this, just as though I were present. (4) When you gather together in the name of our Lord Jesus, and I am with you in spirit, along with the power of our Lord Jesus, (5) hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.”

THE MECHANICS OF REMITTING SINS

✘ Only Jesus Stands On Our Behalf Before God. Only Jesus Provides Us Forgiveness Of Sins.

1 Timothy 2:5 “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,”

✘ We Have Been Sent By Jesus On His Behalf.

Mark 16:15 “He said to them, “Go into all the world, and preach the Good News to the whole creation.”

Matthew 28:18-20 “Then Jesus came up and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (19) Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

✘ We Are Priests Of Jesus- Like the Levitical Priesthood, Execute The Ministering Of The Gospel Of Forgiveness.

1 Peter 2:9 “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:”

✘ We Walk The Earth As Ambassadors Of God’s Kingdom.

Ephesians 6:20 “For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

✘ Like When Peter Was Used To Heal A Man, We Have No Power Of Our Own.

Acts 3:11-13 “While the man was hanging on to Peter and John, all the people, completely astounded, ran together to them in the covered walkway called Solomon’s Portico. (12) When Peter saw this, he declared to the people, “Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this? Why do you stare at us as if we had made this man walk by our own power or piety? (13) The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our forefathers, has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and rejected in the presence of Pilate after he had decided to release him.”

Again, we are not mandatory for this to take place. Anyone can receive forgiveness by coming to the Lord on their own. Yet this is spiritual warfare and we are in the field of battle, seeking to save wounded souls from fatal injury. Some of which who do not know how to approach God on their own. This is why we are sent to preach the word and invite all to find forgiveness. By remitting sins on earth, we are taking away the legal rights of demonic entities and Satan himself. We are saying “God, please deal with this individual as if there is no sin burden in the way.” We are setting the case file to the side before the judge of heaven and earth, making a way for them to receive clemency. We point to the sacrifice of Jesus and then point to the offender, stating that we are coming on their behalf to receive a full pardon from the courts of heaven. Then they are in a better position in the spirit realm, having a brother or sister in Christ come alongside, defending them from the forces of darkness and presenting them to Jesus as a child who needs the completion of the forgiveness act.

So, as we close on this mighty weapon of warfare, we can see the correct process and application for forgiving others within our own sphere of contact. And we have learned that we can remit sins as the body of Christ. Why these topics are complex and can benefit from another study, I do believe we have enough information to understand how to apply these weapons against the devil in a way to win our spiritual battles.