

Forgiveness Practiced Here

Ephesians 4:32 (NLT) "... be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you."

Text: Ephesians 4:32 (NLT) Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

"People are often unreasonable and self-centered. Forgive them anyway. If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway. If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest anyway. If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway. The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow. Do good

anyway. Give the world the best you have and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway. For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway." — Mother Teresa

"To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you." — C.S. Lewis

"To err is human, to forgive, divine." — Alexander Pope

"Forgiveness is the fragrance that the violet sheds on the heel that has crushed it." — Mark Twain

"Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a constant attitude." — Martin Luther King Jr.

"Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies." — Nelson Mandela

Three things to remember are.....

Forgiving Originates From God

Forgiving Ourselves

Forgiving Others

Forgiving Originates from God

You can't out sin God's ability to forgive. It is interesting to note that even when God was dealing with the first sin of mankind He was preparing for the redemption of man from sin. To Satan, the deceiver in the Garden, He said that He would reverse the curse of sin and Satan would be defeated by the offspring of this woman Satan had caused to sin.

Genesis 3:15 (NLT) 15 And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. **He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.**"

To mankind God prepared a plan of salvation in advance of the occurrence of sin.

1 Peter 1:19–20 (NLT) It was the **precious blood of Christ**, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. **God chose him as your ransom long before the world began, but he has now revealed him to you in these last days.**

God's character is to forgive.

2 Peter 3:9 (NLT) The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. **He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.**

John 3:16 (NLT) "For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that **everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.**

Jesus was and is the demonstration of God's willingness to forgive.

Romans 5:8–11 (NLT) But **God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.** And since we have been **made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ,** he will certainly **save us from God's condemnation.** For since our **friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son** while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. So now we can **rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ** has made us friends of God.

In essence, God said, "I will do everything I can to give mankind another chance, even if it means sacrificing my only Son"

God loves so God forgives and restores. Not because we are worthy or deserve it but because He desires a relationship with us.

He will not hold our past sins against us.

Micah 7:18–19 (NKJV) 18 Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy. 19 He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea.

"Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." Hebrews 10:17 (NKJV)

He will restore what sin has destroyed.

Joel 2:25 (NKJV) "So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, .."

Forgiving Ourselves

This can be a process. We can remember the things we did wrong because we are so attached to our own sense of self worth. We need to know that forgiveness is in many ways received and understood by faith.

I repent, then I am forgiven and I can go on.

We will always remember the things we did in the past. Good or bad. So the issues is how do I deal with my memories.

Confessing or repenting means we have turned our inadequacies over to God. He is much more interested in helping us reach our potential than making us feel bad for our past.

If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. But **if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.** 1 John 1:8–9 (NLT)

We don't forgive ourselves because we feel ashamed.

Romans 8:1–2 (NLT) So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. 2 And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.

We don't forgive ourselves because we don't trust ourselves.

Even if we feel guilty, God is greater than our feelings, and he knows everything. 1 John 3:20 (NLT)

Put the past behind and take on the future. We cannot move forward if we do not replace what has been forgiven with what will please the Lord.

Ephesians 4:22–23 (NLT) "...throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes."

Press toward what is best. Don't settle for good enough press for best.

Philippians 3:12–14 (NLT) 12 I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. 13 No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

Forgiving Others

To review from the text - Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. Ephesians 4:32 (NLT)

"Just as Christ has forgiven you" This is the key. Treat others like you want to be treated. Do not hold a grudge against someone for past hurts or they will still have power over you. Forgiveness frees us from having to carry the offense.

Forgiving opens our hearts to receive from the Lord.

"But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too." Mark 11:25 (NLT)

We should ask ourselves why we can't forgive?

Is my past hurt jeopardizing my future?

One last example of forgiving others given by Jesus...

Matthew 18:21–35 (NLT) **Parable of the Unforgiving Debtor**

21 Then **Peter** came to him and asked, "**Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?**" 22 "**No, not seven times,**" Jesus replied, "**but seventy times seven!**"

23 "Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a **king who decided to bring his accounts up to date** with servants who had borrowed money from him. 24 In the process, one of his **debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars.** 25 **He couldn't pay,** so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt. 26 "But the man **fell down before his master and begged him, 'Please, be**

patient with me, and I will pay it all.’ 27 Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt. 28 “But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment. 29 “His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it,’ he pleaded. 30 But his creditor wouldn’t wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full. 31 “When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. 32 Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. 33 Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ 34 Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt. 35 “That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart.”

We are forgiven so let us forgive.