

The Bread of Life



JUNE 2000
- Wayne Dailey -

FORGIVING



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Matthew 6:12

And forgive us our debts
as we forgive our debtors.

How important it is to be forgiven -
. . . and, to forgive.

The Word of God stresses the importance of forgiveness, of learning how to fully and completely forgive others.

When it comes to forgiveness, the Word of God directs a lot of attention on us.

Matthew 6:14

For if ye forgive men their trespasses,
your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

But this isn't always what people do.

One reason is that there are blind spots - where they don't see the need of forgiving others; or, worse yet, they don't see the need to ask others to **forgive them**.

They automatically assume they're forgiven, without ever having asked for forgiveness.

We find here in **Matthew 6** that when we forgive others of their trespasses against us, when we've taken that first step - then we can count on our heavenly Father being right there to forgive us of our trespasses.

God, forgive me! isn't always the answer (that is, our just asking God to forgive us).

There's that need to first forgive those who have sinned against us,

and then God will forgive.

Matthew 6:15

But if ye forgive not men
their trespasses,
neither will your Father forgive
your trespasses.

You can't expect to go on and on
+ without asking
+ covering over and covering up
+ letting it go time and again
+ without forgiving others
+ before things begin to pile up
 which you haven't been forgiven of!

A forgiving spirit -

We have to have a forgiving spirit: where we're in the place of wanting to forgive; where we don't want to be associated, in any way, with something that's been neglected, something that's not been forgiven.

Whether we look at it here in the Sermon on the Mount or elsewhere in the Scriptures, it adds up to say the same thing: if we want forgiveness we need to realize that it is based upon our first forgiving.

Matthew 5:7

Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall obtain mercy.

How do the merciful obtain mercy? by being merciful.

And we can think of forgiveness in this same light: we've got to first be forgiving of others if we are to be assured we, ourselves, have been forgiven.

Matthew 18:21,22

Then came Peter unto Him, and said,
Lord, how often
shall my brother sin against me
and I forgive him?
till seven times?

And Jesus saith unto him,
I say unto thee, Not until seven times:
but until seventy times seven.

That's four hundred and ninety times!!

This expresses the realm of expectation that we would forgive the same person over and over and over: it doesn't matter how many times we have to forgive, nor how often.

The amount of times isn't the issue here. The issue is our forgiving as many times as someone sins against us. We don't need to count. We don't need to keep a scorecard of how many times we have had to forgive.

What's one more time?

If we had to forgive 490 times then another time certainly wouldn't matter - it would be automatic by then!

In one text Jesus has said that if we won't forgive then we won't be forgiven, and in this text He goes on to say that if the need arises we ought to forgive time and again .

Matthew 18:35

So likewise shall My heavenly Father
do also unto you
if ye from your hearts forgive not
every brother their trespasses.

From the heart -

In this story the servant had been forgiven by the king of a ten thousand talent debt, yet he refused to forgive one of his fellow-servants of a debt that was only an hundred pence!

Many times people tend to forgive in a way that just doesn't measure up. We are supposed to forgive - from our hearts. Forgiveness is an act where words bring little results if they aren't spoken from one's heart.

We have to forgive out of the depths of our heart, really wanting the issue cleared up where it goes no further.

Now, there's a lot of power in forgiveness. It's the only way we can clear the record.

We all have to forgive, and one of the reasons we have to forgive is because we need to be forgiven.

Never think that you don't need to be forgiven. That would be like saying that you're 100% perfect. That route will only get you into the realm of hypocrisy.

When someone is forgiving you of something you've done against him, that forgiveness needs to come from his heart.

That's the only way you can have the assurance he has truly forgiven you.

The Lord forgives completely. He said He would separate us from our sins as far as the east is from the west, not to be remembered against us ever again.

And when we forgive we also have to forgive completely.

What does God do after He forgives us? does He bring it up again? does He throw it at us?

Would He expect more of man than He was willing to do, Himself?

If we are to forgive others seventy times seven - I wonder how many times He will forgive us!

You've heard some of these phrases that are common amongst people (maybe this is true even of you): *I'll forgive - but . . .*

BUT!

You can't have any **buts** in forgiveness:

+ I'll forgive you - but I won't forget.

+ I'll forgive you - but I'll bring it up again!

Sometimes, when two people get to arguing, they begin to bring up things that had been forgiven - but, obviously, not forgotten.

They say, *Well, what about what you did to me!* and then bring up things from the past that they had forgiven! - but obviously hadn't forgotten.

The other one thought those things had been straightened out! that they had forgiven. But the reason it's brought up again is that forgiveness wasn't from the heart.

Forgive - and forget!

When we truly forgive from our heart -

that ends it!

We'll never dig it up again.

If we dig it up again - it's a reflection on us that our forgiveness was like shallow water, only ankle deep.

If we really want to forgive, then we need to forgive from our heart - and when we tell someone we forgive him . . . we should drop it right there!

We should forget it. We should never bring it to his attention again. In fact, we shouldn't bring it to anyone else's attention, either!

But there's that carnal element -

When you're carnal it's a lot harder to forgive. You've got to be really spiritual to want to forgive in the manner God wants you to forgive:

+ to forgive from your heart

+ and to forget

It may have already been 485 times today you've had to forgive that one - but, if need be, keep on forgiving.

Mark 11:25

And when ye stand praying, forgive,
if ye have ought against any:
that your Father also which is in heaven
may forgive you your trespasses.

The Lord is saying that when you go to pray -
forgive - **willingly**, in the presence of God.

This lets Him know that you want forgiveness.

Now, that doesn't lessen the need to ask for
forgiveness of any you have ought against.

Remember, if you trespass against a brother or
a sister you need to ask God to forgive you - and
you need to also ask the one whom you
trespassed against to forgive you.

If you do things the way God says to do them, it
won't be long before you find yourself getting
tired of always having to go and make things
right. You won't be so quick to be at odds.

You'll realize that it's about time to stop putting
yourself in the place of needing forgiveness.

Luke 6:37

Judge not,
and ye shall not be judged:
condemn not,
and ye shall not be condemned:
forgive,
and ye shall be forgiven.

Here lack of forgiveness is put alongside judging
and condemning - all brought forth by carnality.

Too proud to forgive!

When you hurt and offend others by judging and
criticizing, by condemning - then you're carnal.

And when you're the one who has been hurt or
offended, and you don't want to forgive, then that,
too, is being carnal.

An unforgiving person is one of whom the devil has taken full advantage. All those unforgiven things get heaped up, and the devil has something to work with.

Forgive, and you'll be forgiven!

Luke 17:3

Take heed to yourselves:

If thy brother trespass against thee,
rebuke him;
and if he repent,
forgive him.

The shoe is on the other foot here. This is talking about someone trespassing against you.

There may be the time when someone you trusted went behind your back and trespassed against you, violating your trust.

If so, you need to speak up and let him know what he has done to you.

You often see signs on someone's property:

No Trespassing!!

Does a man have a right to tell others to stay off his property?

When is a trespass not a trespass? When you've been given permission. When you've been invited.

So you don't want to violate another's privacy. Neither do you want to trespass against another, in doing things that you have no right doing.

Let's take another look at [Luke 17:3](#) and see what you should do with the one who trespasses against you -

Luke 17:3

Take heed to yourselves:

if thy brother trespass against thee,
rebuke him;
and if he repent, forgive him.

If someone trespasses against you, you are to let him know about it. Rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.

What if he doesn't repent? If he hasn't truly repented, neither has he asked your forgiveness. Although you might have forgiven him in the presence of God - yet he hasn't personally asked for your forgiveness.

Now, is it our obligation to ask others' forgiveness when we have trespassed against them? or is it the obligation of the person we've trespassed against to forgive without our asking?

If someone trespasses against us, we are to rebuke him.

As well, when someone is repenting (sorry for what he has done to us) and sincerely asks forgiveness, we are to forgive him.

Get our heart into it - and really forgive him.

Jesus prays, Father, forgive them -

Luke 23:34

**Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them;
for they know not what they do.
And they parted His raiment,
and cast lots.**

Jesus was praying for His Father to forgive those who were trespassing against Him.

We see, here, what Jesus was really like in His heart. While they were crucifying Him, He was praying : *Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing.*

I wouldn't call that a rebuke. Jesus was praying for them, asking His Father to forgive them.

This is the spirit of forgiveness that we ought to have about us. It's an example how we should forgive out of our heart. Forgiveness ought to be that thorough and that genuine.

Now look at what Jesus was doing when this took place - He was making the way that men could be forgiven.

He was paving the road we would walk down one day: the road to salvation and everlasting life.

He was giving His very life's Blood that our sins could be forgiven - washed away.

Father, forgive them -

My, I thank God for such an attitude. It came from the depths of His heart. He wasn't murmuring or complaining. He wasn't there to do them in. He wasn't taking down names so He could get revenge later on. No, He was forgiving!

The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came that we might find forgiveness and newness of life.

We need that forgiving spirit down in our hearts and lives.

Some of us have a long way to go in this life. That means we will have a lot of forgiving to do along the way.

And, also, there will be a lot of times when we'll need to ask another to forgive us.

Bear that in mind. We need God to forgive us, and He does forgive. The blood that was shed on Calvary's Cross is working constantly on our behalf: one offering for all sin, a covering for our sins.

Because of that sacrifice, our sins have been remitted. They have been purged away with the Blood of Christ.

And, because we're forgiven, we find that we want to forgive others. If Jesus so forgave us, shouldn't we sincerely forgive others?

If Jesus went so far in laying down His life to provide forgiveness for us, we ought to be sincere when it comes to forgiving others.

A time to put it behind - and be a comfort

II Corinthians 2:7

So that contrariwise
ye ought rather to forgive him,
and comfort him,
lest perhaps
such a one should be swallowed up
with overmuch sorrow.

Here's a person who in all appearance was being scorned because of his sin and wrong-doing.

In that state, things came to a point where Paul seemed to be saying,

OK, you withdrew from this brother to let him feel the weight of what he had done - but, now it is time to turn and forgive.

They needed to do this to comfort him - because it seemed very possible that he could be swallowed up by much sorrow,

But he's being corrected!

Shouldn't you keep the rod down on him?

Hebrews 12:6

For whom the Lord loveth
He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son
whom He receiveth.

Is there a time to let up on the rod of correction?

Does the Lord ever correct you?

When He does, does He just keep coming down on you and down on you?

or is there a time when His chastisement lifts? a time for Him to let it work in you now to correct you?

We wouldn't expect that the Lord would whip us and whip us and whip us, without giving us a chance to get up and make things right.

II Corinthians 2:10

To whom ye forgive any thing,
I forgive also:
for if I forgave any thing,
to whom I forgave it,
for your sakes forgive I it
in the person of Christ.

Paul was willing to forgive -

Paul is putting himself in the middle of something here. They were dealing with a problem in the Corinthian church, and Paul told them that to whom they forgave any thing, he also forgave.

Though he's not there, there is a willingness in Paul's heart to forgive. He's not going to hold anything against someone else.

He's not going to hold anything over their heads.

So, if the church had seen clearly to forgive that person and restore him, Paul is saying that he'll forgive, too - for their sakes.

For your sakes I will forgive that person as the Lord would forgive him.

Paul saw there was one way to get over such a problem: and that was - to be willing to forgive.

Forgiveness in the Old Testament -



In the Old Testament to be forgiven and to forgive was entirely different than forgiveness in the New Testament.

Back there sins had to be purged away with sacrifice after sacrifice, one after another. There was always the need for yet another sacrifice.

There were the daily offerings, and then there was the day of Atonement: a time of the sin offerings when you laid your hand on the head of a goat, that sins might be spiritually transferred to the goat - and carried away

We realize Jesus was like this scapegoat. Our sins were laid upon Him. He bore our sins, taking our place

Willing to forgive from the heart -

Now, we should be willing to forgive like Paul was willing. He gives us a reason to forgive that goes beyond the fact of mere forgiveness, merely clearing the matter up. Paul well knew that a lot of matters didn't really get cleared up just by saying, *Forgive me, I'm truly sorry.*

A lot of people were insincere and didn't forgive from the heart. They forgave with mere lip service.

II Corinthians 2:11

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

What is Paul saying here?

The devil would like to keep you in a realm where you're unforgiving; where things won't get straightened out; where sins are hanging unforgiven - and, because trespasses are undealt with, sin is left in your life.

The devil would want to keep that hanging over your head.

Remember the beautiful words of Jesus, when He said, *The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me - John 14:30.*

There was nothing in Jesus that the devil could work through.

What about you? Is there something there?

Now, when we are unforgiving the devil has something to work with. He'll hang that over our heads.

There will be sins that will just hang around and hang around - because they're unforgiven.

We've got to break the cycle - break the chain. Forgive - and be forgiven.

Now, if someone comes and asks your forgiveness - don't take that lightly. If he humbles himself and says, **Forgive me!** don't take that lightly. He came for a reason.

You say, **But they're always doing that!!**

I don't care who does it, or how often he does it. Maybe his conscience is tender.

To him it was an offense even though you don't see it as anything worth noticing.

If he asks forgiveness, you forgive him sincerely - and then his conscience can be at ease.

If you don't forgive, then you're adding something to your own account.

You're not willing to forgive that thing today - and then down the road you're going to want God to forgive you of something serious.

And God will say, **I'm not going to forgive you until . . .**

All these things tend to pile up - if you let them.

My friend couldn't rest until he sought to be forgiven -

When I was a youngster, I knew a man who always treated me nicely. And later on when I grew up and was in the ministry I held some meetings in the area, and he came out to a service.

He had done something years before that hurt someone (he never told me what it was that he had done) and deep in his heart he wanted to make it right.

It was a sin he had committed before he even had gotten saved, yet it was still troubling him.

He told me about having sinned against this man and wanting to make it right. He didn't know where the man was, but wanted to find a way to correct things.

His conscience was really troubled over this issue.

Well, he came to the meeting to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And when I offered to pray for him, he told me about wanting to correct this past sin.

He said he didn't feel God would give him the Spirit until he went and made things right, asking that man's forgiveness.

Whatever it was that he had done to the man, he felt he had offended him.

He wasn't saved back then, and probably never gave thought to what he was doing - but down through the years he could never put it out of his mind. He knew he had done damage to that man somehow, and he was wanting to make it right.

The price of wanting to feel right with God.

Years had gone by, and he had no idea where this man was by now - but he was going to search until he found him, and made things right.

He was going to humble himself and ask forgiveness, admitting how wrong it was for him to do what he had done.

And, you know, he went - and found the man! He sought him out, and asked his forgiveness. He repented and made things right. And the man willingly forgave him.

Realize that getting things right may have its price. That man held the key to my friend's being forgiven. He could go to God repeatedly and ask forgiveness - but that didn't straighten it out with the one he had sinned against.

In his heart he knew what he had to do to get it straightened out. It took awhile - and not long after that my wife and I were visiting my mother, and stopped by his home. A few days after that we heard that he had had a spell with his heart.

He called for a visiting nurse to come to his home, and while he was telling her what had happened - he died! He died that quickly!

Now, the point of this man's story is that he went down to the grave having made that thing right, that thing which had been so obnoxious to his soul.

He had been forgiven by God and by the one he had sinned against.

Destroying Satan's advantage -

Satan had a real advantage over that issue in this man's life; but when he made things right, it destroyed that advantage.

Do you have to make anything right? It takes some courage - but you don't want the devil to have an advantage over you, do you?

Know that bitterness is a bitter pill, a breeding ground for unforgiveness, not being willing to forgive.

Surely we ought to be willing to forgive if someone comes to us asking our forgiveness.

Is there any area where you need to forgive someone? or any area where you need someone to forgive you?

Are you letting something go by without making it right?

Are you troubled in your soul about something you did that hurt someone else?

You need to clear yourself by seeking his forgiveness.

When you sin against another and that sin is left unattended to - that sin chains you to that person. It's ever there between you.

And if you don't forgive and make it right, do you know what's going to happen? You'll drag that thing to the Judge! drag it to the judgment day.

Is that where you want to straighten it out? Wouldn't it be better to take care of it now? to forgive and get it out of the way? to put it under the Blood?

**Forgive now -
and do it from your heart.**

Understand that God doesn't override things that aren't right. He doesn't wink at sin. He doesn't take sin lightly - and neither should you.

You should keep your life clean and pure before God.

In some cases it's not a matter where you don't forgive, but where you won't forgive. If you're not a forgiving person and refuse to forgive - what then?

Oh, you believe God will forgive you of those things you confess to Him because the Scriptures would tell you this:

I John 1:9

**If we confess our sins,
He is faithful and just
to forgive us our sins
and to cleanse us
from all unrighteousness.**

BUT . . .

But the Scriptures also tell us that unless we're willing to forgive others - then we won't be forgiven:

Think about it this way. It's an insult to God when you refuse to forgive someone, after all He's done for you.

When you were lost in sin, a wretched sinner on your way to hell - God forgave you of all you ever did! He set you free and forgave you of your past sins when He saved your soul -

- yet you refuse to forgive another?

How much you have been forgiven of! If God so forgave you - shouldn't you do likewise to others? In every way and in every case, shouldn't you forgive?

Are there any chains to someone you won't forgive? or someone you won't humble yourself before and ask forgiveness of?

If there is - what should you do about it?

Remember my friend - and how he had to humble himself and make things right. When he did, he got the victory and found the true peace of God in his heart.

A lot of people hold things against Mother, hold things against Dad, hold things against a brother or sister. It's like the Hatfields and the McCoys - they hold that against them for years, never laying down their bitterness.

Are you holding anything against another person? I trust, after reading this message that you know you have no right to hold anything against anyone!

Ephesians 4:32

**And be ye kind one to another,
tenderhearted,
forgiving one another,
even as God for Christ's sake
hath forgiven you.**