



The Lost Art of Being Forgiving

Lesson Six

The Four Fundamentals of Forgiveness

The Biblical Basis for Being Set Free and Setting Others Free in Christ



Why Is Receiving Forgiveness from the Father SO FOUNDATIONAL to ALL OTHER KINDS of Forgiveness?

- Because whatever our heavenly Father gives us He expects us **TO SHARE** it with one another!

“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” Matthew 6:12

“For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.” Matthew 6:14-15

“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)

“And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him. My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart.” Matthew 18:35

- Because the way our heavenly Father forgives us is the **SAME WAY** we are to forgive one another.

“Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32

“bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.” Colossians 3:13

“Just As” Is the Gospel-centered Way to Say...

- 1) Forgive one another **BECAUSE** God has already forgiven you in Christ.
- 2) Forgive one another to the same **DEGREE** God has forgiven you in Christ.
- 3) Forgive one another in the same **MANNER** that God has forgiven you in Christ.

Recovering the Lost Art of BEING Forgiving

1. Being forgiving REFLECTS God’s unconditional attitude toward all unrepentant sinners in general.

- God is forgiving toward **all sinners** on the basis of Christ’s atoning sacrifice. *John 3:16; 1John 2:2; Romans 5:6-8; 1John 4:9-11*
- God does not **actually forgive** all sinners but He is truly forgiving toward all sinners. *1Timothy 4:10*

2. Being forgiving does not always RESULT in the conditional act of personally forgiving our offenders.

Even Though He Is Forgiving Toward All Offenders...

- God still **REQUIRES** *sinner*s to repent of their sin, seek forgiveness, and receive it by trusting in Christ and His atoning work for sinners.

This Is HOW God Forgives Sinners...

By **BEING** forgiving toward all sinners in Christ but still **REQUIRING** confessing, repenting, and trusting Christ.
Acts 2:37-38; Luke 24:47; Acts 3:19; 20:21; 26:20

- God still **REQUIRES** *saved sinner*s to repent of their sin, seek forgiveness, and receive it by confessing Christ and His atoning work for sinners. *1 John 1:9*
- Since this is the way God forgave us, we should forgive other for the same **REASON** and in the same **MANNER**.

"Since Christ has forgiven the repenting sinner, the forgiven sinner ought to be forgiving of others. Forgiveness, of course, requires repentance of the wrong doer." – John Butler

3. Being forgiving does not **REPLACE** going and giving forgiveness.

The Need for Both the Unconditional Attitude of Being Forgiving and the Conditional Act of Giving Forgiveness

- General Commands: **BE** forgiving toward unrepentant offenders. *Mark 11:25; Matthew 5:43-46; Luke 6:27-36*
- Specific Commands: **ASK** for forgiveness as a repentant offender and **GIVE** forgiveness to repentant offenders.
 - 1) **GO** to the person you have offended and **ASK** them to forgive you. *Matthew 5:21-26*
 - 2) **GO** to the person who has offended you and seek to **GIVE** them forgiveness. *Matthew 18:15-18; Luke 17:1-5*

The Differences Between the Unconditional Attitude of Being Forgiving and the Conditional Act of Giving Forgiveness

- The *attitude* of being forgiving is **personal, unilateral, and unconditional**.
 - 1) **"Personal"** emphasizes the need for your own **HEART** to be right before God and toward the person.
 - 2) **"Unilateral"** emphasizes that the other person does not have to be **INVOLVED/PRESENT** for this to happen.
 - 3) **"Unconditional"** emphasizes the need to be this way **REGARDLESS** of what the person does or does not do.
- The *act* of asking and giving forgiveness is **relational, mutual, and conditional**.
 - 1) **"Relational"** emphasizes the need to **GO** to the person – preferably in person.
 - 2) **"Mutual"** emphasizes the need to **INTERACT** with the person and not do it unilaterally.
 - 3) **"Conditional"** emphasizes the need to actually **ASK** for forgiveness and/or **GIVE** forgiveness to the offender.

Being Forgiving Set Us Free Even When Others Never Ask Us for Forgiveness or Never Give Us Forgiveness!

- Being forgiving is the **gospel-centered** way of being set free when dealing with the unrepentant.
- Being forgiving is an **unconditional attitude** that sets us free when others don't confess their sin and ask for forgiveness.
- Giving forgiveness is a **conditional act** that sets others free when they confess their sin and ask for forgiveness.