

FORGIVENESS

TEXT: LK. 11: 4 cf 23: 34a

INTRODUCTION: Forgiveness is one of the commandments of Jesus to his disciples. Forgive one to another, love your enemies, bless he that curses you etc are great paradox of Christ teachings, though this aspect of life is easily forgotten when we're confronted with in the real life.

Beloved, as we study and read this series let the Holy Spirit show us where we've been wounded by others or where we have wounded others or ourselves; That we might ask for forgiveness and received pardon!

“FORGIVE US OUR SINS, FOR WE ALSO FORGIVE EVERYONE WHO SINS AGAINST US”. “FATHER FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY DO NOT KNOW WHAT THEY ARE DOING” (Lk.11: 4; 23:34 NIV).

What is Forgiveness? It is a noun derived from the verb (root word) Forgive: - Oxford dict. Defines 'forgive' as Cease to feel angry, hurt or bitter to a person, group or about a thing done to you. While forgiveness is the act of putting away, forgiving or removing those anger, hurt, bitter and shameful experiences from ones heart and forgetting them completely.

We need to forgive those who trespass against us; today even couples live under one roof but separated in their hearts because of unforgiveness and thereby withholding God's destined blessings for them. Forgiveness must flow from and to both parties. Even among colleagues and team members when there's a betrayal of trust it could lead to unforgiveness and if we don't apply Jesus principle regarding forgiveness as stated in Matt.18: 21-35 as brother peter asked Jesus how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins – hurt, bitterness against me? Up to seven times. Our Lord responded not only 7times but $70 \times 7 = 490$ times /day

This is unlimited forgiveness and beloved lets ask the Holy Spirit at this moment to search the intent of our heart and show us where we with-held any person in our heart and forgive such one so that the Lord will open heaven upon us. When we don't forgive we're unmerciful and God will always reward every unforgiveness.

Why must I Forgive? It is a divine commandment.

As believers, it is mandated of us to forgive because the Lord God pardon our iniquities. Isa.43: 25 **“I, even I, am he who blot out your transgressions for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more”**, God ordained divine forgiveness and ours is to follow His ways/ pattern of life. Isa.44: 22: - **“I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you”**.

Lets read Luke 6: 35-38.

Jesus Christ Our ultimate role model had this to say

“ BUT LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, DO GOOD TO THEM, AND LEND TO THEM WITHOUT EXPECTING TO GET ANYTHING BACK. THEN YOURREWARD WILL BE GREAT, AND YOU WILL BE THE SONS OF THE MOST HIGH,

BECAUSE HE IS KIND TO THE UNGREATFUL AND WICKED. BE MERCIFUL,
JUST AS YOUR FATHER IS MERCIFUL.

DO NOT JUDGE, AND YOU WILL NOT BE JUDGED. DO NOT CONDEMN AND
YOU WILL NOT BE CONDEMNED. FORGIVE, AND YOU WILL BE FORGIVEN.
GIVE, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU. A GOOD MEASURE, PRESSED DOWN,
SHAKEN TOGETHER AND RUNNING OVER, WILL BE Poured INTO YOUR
LAP, FOR WITH THE MEASURE YOU USE, IT WILL BE MEASURED TO YOU”

(NIV).

When we keep loving and talking good of those who hurt us, though practically it looks difficult when we remember the set back they cause us and the betrayer of our trust but at this point our flesh and personal ego must give way, in-order to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ and to attend the height He has set before us. In order word this implies that when we love and do good to our enemies, God will abundantly bless and uplift us to higher ground.

Another practical example in the Old Testament is Joseph, despite all that his brother did to him, in Gen.50: 17. Joseph wept as he forgave his brothers though they meant it for evil but God divine purpose for the life of Joseph came to reality, his brothers bowed to him was a fulfillment of his vision in Gen.37. Take a look of that chapter 50:17 in (NIV version)...in treating you so badly! Thinking they've Jeopardize your career and future! FORGIVE. Today you're rejected but remember the stone the builder rejected becomes the corner stone later. Pls. FORGIVE.

Have you been treated so badly in the society, family in the past? or in the present? Have men so ridicule you as nothing? And it creates a hole/ wound in your heart when remembered! FORGIVENESS is what you need for your breakthrough and healing; then watch God's divine help as touching your life. Don't think evil of them, rather bless and pray for them always. Don't feel being forgotten by God, when we forgive, God visits us in a special way.

Can we pray and ask our Father to help us to forgive, pardon those who do evil against us and let receive mercy and grace from Him to call or visit such a person to make peace.

Remember, God forgives and bless us when we forgave others! As disciples of Jesus Christ, people will take us to be fool as we follow in His steps! But, He will always exalts us in abundant blessings.

Be encouraged. Read Gen. 49: 22-26, the meaning of Joseph and take Solace in it and may He who has put this in my heart bless you greatly in Jesus name amen.

Manaratha!

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