

Intro: Today as we continue our study of the Lord's Prayer, I thought you might appreciate a different voice!!!
Video Clip

While the image is adorable, the words themselves have incredible power

Today I want to look with you at one of the most difficult sections of the prayer "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"
In fact, of all the different things that Jesus modeled for us in the prayer...THIS is the only piece that He qualifies!
When He gets done giving them the model, He circles back and says...Remember what I said...it has some big implications!

Matthew 6:9-13 Pg 685

1. Forgiveness Defined: Let's Talk About What Forgiveness IS:

- **Forgive:** Compound word! To send + from = *to send away from, to send forth*
Can be, and often is translated in a multitude of different ways, all similar, most carry slightly different connotation
 - >Let go of: ie debt
 - >to wipe off: ie mark or smudge
 - >to cancel: ie something owed or recorded
 - >to release: ie from bondage, prison
 - >to remove: ie offence
 - >to relieve: ie punishment
 - >to erase: ie record of

Each one of these different translations brings a slightly different understanding to the word. Here is what is important to remember. In every case there is a LEGITIMATE issue. Something is owed, debt has been incurred, an action demands a consequence. And, in each case, instead of the debt being collected, the record being kept or the punishment being administered, the one who incurred that debt, or owed that price, or made that mark or was in bondage...is set free!

Jesus gives us an example of forgiveness so that we can see exactly what it looks like:

EX: Matthew 18:23-33 Parable of Unmerciful servant Vs 27: Forgave the debt: Exact same greek word

2. Forgiveness Principles: 10 Things You Have to Understand About Biblical Forgiveness

Jesus had a LOT to say about forgiveness: When He models for us that in His prayer, I think He incorporated all He taught

- a. Our Forgiveness for others is grounded in God's forgiveness for us. Eph 4:32; Col 3:13
- b. IF we refuse to forgive others, then God doesn't forgive us! Mt 6:14-15
- c. Forgiveness is to be unending, (originates in the heart of God.) Mt 18:21
- d. Forgiveness is a matter of the heart...not the head. Mt 18:35
- e. Forgiveness is a unilateral decision we make. Luke 23:24
- f. You can have forgiveness without reestablishing relationship! John 1:29 *take away sin world*
- g. After forgiveness relationship requires repentance and rebuilding of trust. John 1:12 (received him)
- f. Forgiveness sets two prisoners free. Offender...and Offended! John 8:1-11
- h. Our capacity to forgive comes from understanding God's forgiveness for us Luke 7:36-40
- i. To ask God for that which we refuse to give to others is an insult to Him. Psalm 145:8

3. 6 Steps Toward Forgiveness.

Earlier this week I was talking with someone in agonizing pain over betrayal..."I want to forgive...how?"

1. Remember what God has done for you. (Play the highlight reel of YOUR failures and sins)
2. Make a conscious choice to release, sent away, let go of, cancel the debt. (Write a bill...CANCELED!)
3. Choose to suspend punishment. Whatever is "owed" let it go! (Nail to cross) Usually OUR sins..THEIRS!
4. Give space and opportunity for repentance. Be willing to listen.
5. Open up the possibility of mercy and relationship if repentance is offered.
6. Give an appropriate amount of time for healing to take place (Give it a year)

CONCL:

Forgiveness is easier talked about than given!

Just this week alone:

- **2 different Spouse that was betrayed by her husband of almost 30 years**
- **Brother that was betrayed by his brother in the most despicable way**
- **Man whose boss treated him horribly**
- **Young woman that was harmed in an incredibly painful way**
- **Pastor who was betrayed**

**Some of those hurts...are so deep...so personal...so intimate and painful that they can take YEARS to heal
THEY CAN BE HEALED...starts with a choice**

2 Responses Today

1. Come and find forgiveness from God

- >**Not Acknowledge Him and thank Him for His blessing in your life**
- >**Not Honor Him for who He is**
- >**Not Living in a way that exemplifies His character**
- >**Not treating others in a way that acknowledges they are made in His image**

2. Come and ask God for help with forgiving someone else

- >**Bigger than you are**
- >**Not bigger than He is**
- >**Come set everyone free! Yourself...and others..**

3. Go seek forgiveness from someone you have offended

- >**don't wait for them**
- >**don't be proud**
- >**humble yourself**