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Lesson 12

Forgiveness

“Forgive and forget.”

Easier said than done sometimes, isn’t it? Forgiveness is an important thing to consider though. Especially when put in the context of just how much each and every one of us is forgiven by God when we accept His gift of grace (Titus 2:11-14; Ephesians 1:7). Forgiveness is a gift you can give to others, but it is also a gift to yourself. Forgiveness is FREEDOM, and we’ve been “called to freedom” (Galatians 5:13). Let’s study to find a way to make that phrase, “Forgive and forget”, easier done.

1. According to Matthew 7:12, how are we to treat others?

Peter asked about forgiveness in Matthew 18:21-22 and Luke 17:3, 4.

2. How many times was forgiveness asked for?

3. How many times was it to be given?

4. What three things go together in Luke 17:3-4?

Jesus uses a parable to make His point about forgiveness very clear in Matthew 18:23-35.

5. What had the Master done? (verses 25-27)

6. This story uses some exaggeration to make the point. Explain the extreme circumstances that are compared. (verses 24 and 28)

7. Define “compassion”.

8. What do we lose if won’t forgive others? (Matthew 6:14-15)

9. Fill in the blank.

“And be \_\_\_\_\_ to one another, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ one another, even as God \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ forgave you.” Ephesians 4:32

10. Write Colossians 3:13 here.

Let’s consider that one for a minute. “Even as God in Christ forgave you” and “as Christ forgave you”; what exactly does that mean?

10. Who is God “ready to forgive” in Psalm 86:5?

11. What did God expect from Israel before we would “forgive their sin and heal their land”? (2 Chronicles 7:14)

12. How does God forgive (justify, give life)? Use the verses to find the answers.

a. Romans 3:23-24

b. Romans 8:32

c. 1 Corinthians 2:12

d. Revelation 21:6

e. Revelation 22:17

13. Does God expect something from us before He “freely” gives His forgiveness? (1 John 1:9; Acts 2:38)

So we are to forgive others in the same way that God forgives us – freely. God doesn’t forgive us without our repentance, but He is patiently waiting for us to repent so He can forgive us (Acts 17:30-31; Acts 26:17-18). God wipes the slate clean for us when we repent (Col.2:13). We have no other way to “undo” all the things we do against Him. It isn’t something He wastes on those who have no use for it (Luke 15:11-32).

Conclusion:

Is it right for you to expect your parents and friends to forgive you if you have never said, “I’m sorry I…”? On the flip side, do you want to be treated harshly until you say those words in just the right way? If you’ve done wrong to someone – humble yourself and admit your wrong and ask for forgiveness (James 5:16). If someone does wrong toward you, pray for them (Luke 6:28), and be ready with forgiveness when they come to you. You may even need to make the first step, by bringing it up to them (Matthew 18:15). Your own lack of forgiveness can get in the way of your worship being received by God (Matthew 5:23, 24), and as we’ve already mentioned can keep you from being forgiven by God! It’s a blight that you want to remove from your own life, and should want to help remove from someone else’s life when it’s in your power to do so. You can’t forgive their sins as God can, but you can forgive their mistakes towards you – just a further reach of the blessing of forgiveness that began before Creation and was sealed on the Cross!