

## Why Do Those Forgiven Mistreat Their Brothers?



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) November 6, 2018

“If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matthew 6:15-16). Jesus forgave us out of his goodness and mercy and, likewise, he says we are to be loving and merciful toward our brothers and sisters.

Paul refers to Jesus’ command, saying, “Even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do” (Colossians 3:13). He then expounds on how we pursue obedience to this command: “Put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another; if anyone has a complaint against another ... above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection” (3:12-14).

What does it mean to “bear with one another” or, as it reads in the King James Version, to be “forbearing”? The Greek word means “to put up with, to tolerate.” This suggests enduring things we don’t like. We are being told to tolerate the failures of others, to put up with ways we do not understand.

At an overseas conference where I was scheduled to speak, several prominent ministers warned me against cooperating with a particular minister, claiming he was into bizarre worship and other things they considered foolish. Yet, when I met that pastor, I saw Christ in him; he was a kind, loving, gentle man of prayer. I realized that these ministers refused to “bear with” a brother in Christ merely because they had differences in style.

Why do servants of God, who have been forgiven so much personally, mistreat their brethren and refuse to fellowship with them? I believe it can be traced back to a struggle to understand and accept God’s mercy and goodness, a trap all of us can fall into if we are not careful. We must diligently seek to trust the Lord for patience, mercy and love toward others.

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