

## The Life Changing Power of Forgiveness



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) December 31, 2020

Forgiveness is not just a one-time act, but a way of life, meant to bring us into every blessing in Christ. “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:44-45).

According to Jesus, forgiveness isn’t a matter of picking or choosing whom we would forgive. We can’t say, “You’ve hurt me too much, so I’m not forgiving you.” Christ tells us, “For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?” (5:46).

It doesn’t matter who our grudge might be against. If we hold onto it, it will lead to bitterness that poisons every aspect of our lives. Unforgiveness brings on spiritual famine, weakness, and a loss of faith, afflicting not just us but everyone in our circle.

Over the past fifty years of my ministry, I have seen terrible devastation in the lives of those who withheld forgiveness. Yet, I also have seen the glorious power of a forgiving spirit. Forgiveness transforms lives, causing the windows of heaven to open. It fills our cup of spiritual blessing to the brim with abundant peace, joy and rest in the Holy Ghost. Jesus’ teaching on this subject is very specific, and if you want to move in this wonderful realm of blessing, then heed and embrace his words.

“For 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 6:14-15). Make no mistake: God isn’t making a bargain with us here. He is not saying, “Because you’ve forgiven others, I will forgive you.” We can never earn God’s forgiveness. Only the shed blood of Christ merits forgiveness of sin.

Rather, Christ is saying, “Full confession of sin requires that you forgive others. If you hold on to any unforgiveness, then you haven’t confessed all your sins. True repentance means confessing and forsaking every grudge, crucifying every trace of bitterness toward others. Anything less isn’t repentance.”

This goes hand in hand with his Beatitude: “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy” (Matthew 5:7). His point: Forgive others, so you can move into the blessings and joy of sonship. God can then pour on tokens of his love. And when you forgive, you’re revealing the Father’s nature to the world.

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