

A Godly Heart Forgives #5

Text : **Luke 17: 3, Mark 11: 25, Eph. 4: 32**

S#1.
S#2.

A. We've looked at forgiveness from four different perspectives.

1. We started our series by studying the parable of the unforgiving servant.
 - a. The context of all of Matthew 18 is the Christian's interpersonal relationships.
 - b. Jesus used hyperbole to teach and illustrate the necessity of forgiving others.
 - c. The Lord emphasized forgiveness because our salvation depends on it.
2. We looked at some reasons why we must forgive and the cost of failure.
 - a. Christian have more to be thankful for than anyone on earth. (*total forgiveness*)
 - b. To be forgiving people we must view others differently.
 - c. Forgiveness is not a natural human response. *It requires one to change.*
3. We defined the concept of forgiveness. (*many misconceptions distort meaning*)
 - a. What forgiveness is not.
 - b. The true meaning of forgiveness.
 - c. Some general observations of the qualities of forgiveness.
4. We approached the fourth lesson from a practical viewpoint; "How do we forgive ?"
 - * a. The onus is on the offended party. "**go to him**" (*Not host a pity party.*)
 - b. Forgiveness cannot be dependent upon how one feels. (*It's too soon, I still hurt.*)
 - c. True forgiveness emanates from the heart. (*Part of Christian's character*)

S#3.

B. With this lesson we'll consider a difficult and controversial aspect of forgiveness.

1. Notice the command of our Lord. S#4.

Luke 17: 3 – **Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.** (*Onus is on offended party to initiate, rebuke*)

 - a. To rebuke need not carry a connotation of an attack or a conflict.
 - b. Rebuke (*epitimao*) **1** to show honour to, ... **4** to tax with fault, to admonish
 - c. The word "**IF**" indicates a condition. One must repent before being forgiven.
2. The Lord also gave another command about forgiveness : S#5.

Mark 11: 25 – **Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in Heaven will also forgive you your transgressions.**

Note : In NKJV and the NIV the word "*him*" is added after forgive. It's **not** in the text.

- a. When a Christian is worshipping God (praying) he **MUST** forgive.
- b. This forgiveness is extended to "anyone" (everyone) for anything (everything.)
- c. It is universal and unconditional. (*forgive anyone for anything*)

C. Thus, the question this lesson poses is :**S#6.**

1. Which of these passages is correct ?
2. Is forgiveness conditional as in **Luke 17:3** or unconditional as in **Mark 11: 25**.

D. Either position could be consistent with scriptures.**S#7.**

1. God's forgiveness is directly linked to repentance. (cf ... **Luke 17: 3**) **S#8.**
Acts 3: 19 – Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;
2. God forgives the sins of His children on an ongoing basis. (cf .. **Mark 11: 25**) **S#9.**
I John 2: 1-2 ... I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; **2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins;**
3. Do we become lost every time we sin until we repent of that sin. **Certainly not !**
 - a. What if we forget to about some sin before we repent and ask forgiveness.
 - b. What if we die before we have an opportunity to repent ? (*crash while speeding*)

The scriptures are from God.**S#10.****God does not make mistakes.****There are no contradictions.****Thus, we must reconcile these verses.****I. Must repentance occur before a Christian can forgive an offender?****S#11.****A. If **Luke 17: 3** is dogmatically applied, it can prevent a Christian's worship. #12.**

1. If a husband goes to his wife and confronts her about her having an affair.
 - a. She admits to the affair, but refuses to repent.
 - b. *"He loves me and I love him so I am leaving you."*
 - c. All future contact with her is through her lawyer.
 - d. There is no hope of her repenting so she cannot be forgiven.
 - e. Mark 11: 25 indicates that without forgiveness, there can be no prayer/worship
2. If a coworker lied about you and got you fired.
 - a. You quickly moved to another city to find a job.
 - b. Later the company won't give you her last name or contact information.
 - c. You are unable to find her so there is no rebuke and no repentance ... not forgiven.
3. An uncle abused you as a child but he dies or develops Alzheimer's? Can't rebuke.

B. After you rebuke and they refuse to repent, can you forgive – Mark 11 ?
After you have forgiven someone with Mark 11 forgiveness, is there no more grounds to rebuke him, if so is there no way to restore the relationship ? **S#13.**

C. Obviously, two different kinds of forgiveness are under consideration.

S#14.

II. We will use an “alliteration” as a memory tool to ask questions of the passages.

- Communication
- Command
- Condition
- Contact
- Course of the action
- Consignee of benefit (*person who receives benefit*)

S#15.

A. **Luke 17: 3** – Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

S#16.

1. **Communication** : Human speech (*You sinned, I repent, I forgive*)

2. **Command** : Rebuke , forgive

S#17.

3. **Condition** : “IF” he repents

S#18.

4. **Contact** : Yes .. Two parties must interact ... **Matt 18** (*four eye conference*)

#19.

5. **Course of the action** : interpersonal ... horizontal

S#20.

6. **Consignee of benefit** : the offender

S#21.

B. **Mark 11: 25** – Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in Heaven will also forgive you your transgressions.

S#22.

1. **Communication** : Prayer to God

2. **Command** : Forgive

S#23.

3. **Condition** : None

S#24.

4. **Contact** : Not required (*unilateral decision*)

S#25.

5. **Course of action** : Vertical ... From man to God

S#26.

6. **Consignee of benefit** : The offended party has his prayers restored.

S#27.

C. Thus, we are obviously discussing two different types of forgiveness.

S#28.

1. All six comparisons are different.

2. Both the actions and the results are different.

* *Thus, we are not comparing apples to apples.*

III. Let us observe some further differences.**S#29.****A. There is a difference in timing.****S#30.**

1. **Mark 11** ... Forgiveness is immediate
 - a. It happens on the spot.
 - b. A moral decision is made and the transaction is complete.
2. **Luke 17** ... Forgiveness is after rebuke
 - a. It is given after repentance.
 - b. It may never occur if repentance is not forthcoming. (*May choose to forgive.*)

B. There is a different audience who hears or receives forgiveness.**S#31.**

1. **Mark 11** ... No one ... from man's heart to God's heart
2. **Luke 17** ... The offender hears a rebuke from the offended.

C. Differ according to that which triggers the forgiveness.**S#32.**

1. **Mark 11** ... One's own thoughts, personal feelings, conscience
2. **Luke 17** ... The repentance of the offender. (*Offended may NOT refuse.*)

D. Differ in what is accomplished.**S#33.**

1. **Mark 11** ... Offended person has renewed fellowship with God in prayer.
 - a. Prevents the one offended from poisoning his own soul with bitterness, resentment
 - b. Enables God to receive the worship to which He is entitled.
2. **Luke 17** ... Restoring and renewing earthly relationship. (*horizontal*)
 - a. The offender is restored **IF** he also repents to God.
 - b. God is glorified. (*Joy in Heaven over one sinner who repents.*)

E. These different kinds of forgiveness are referred to in different ways.**S#34.**

1. **Mark 11** ... Universal Forgiveness
Luke 17 ... Relational Forgiveness
2. **Mark 11** ... Heart Forgiveness
Luke 17 ... Verbal Forgiveness
3. **Mark 11** ... Judicial Forgiveness
Luke 17 ... Fellowship Forgiveness

IV. Some things we must understand :**S#35.****A. Luke 17: 3 ... Sin separates man from God, but also man from man.****S#36.**

1. Where there is separation, there must be reconciliation.
 - a. **Matt. 18: 15** – **If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.**
 - b. Restoration can only happen after repentance. (*If only one wants the relationship ..*)
2. You can't control the other guy, but you can control you.
 - a. **Rom. 12: 18** – **If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.**
 - b. Only God knows the hearts of both parties. (*Hypocrite fool men; they can't fool God.*)

S#37.**B. Mark 11 forgiveness is needed because people tend to respond to sin sinfully.**

1. Remember the story of David and Nabal. (*“fool”*)
 - a. Nabal returned evil for good and David was about return evil for evil.
 - b. **I Sam. 25: 33** – **and blessed be your discernment, and blessed be you, who have kept me this day from bloodshed and from avenging myself by my own hand.** (*Natural response*)
2. This nature is why Mark 11 forgiveness must be made the character of our hearts.
3. It is the fruit of love for our fellow man ... unconditional and universally applied.
 - a. Without it we tend to have a “pity party” .. “Oh poor me, I don't deserve this ...”
 - b. Our resentment finds ways to express itself; we tell others and seek sympathy.

S#38.**C. Remember the meaning of the words translated “forgive.”****S#39.**

1. **Matt. 18 , Mark 11**
Forgive : *aphiemi* : **1** to send away. 1A to bid going away or depart. 1A1 of a husband divorcing his wife. 1B to send forth, yield up, to expire. 1C to let go, let alone, let be. 1c1 to disregard. 1c2 to leave, not to discuss now, (a topic).
2. **Eph 4: 32 , Col.3:13**
Forgive : *charizomai* : **1** to do something pleasant or agreeable (to one), to do a favour to, gratify. 1A to show one's self gracious, kind, benevolent. 1B to grant forgiveness, to pardon. 1C to give graciously, give freely, bestow.
3. Forgiveness is a choice to let go of our resentment towards others and to start loving them as Christ does.

D. Everyone experiences sinful acts perpetrated against them.**S#40.**

1. The test is how one responds to the sins against him.
2. We are never allowed to get even or to take vengeance on anyone for anything.

3. **ILL.** Neighbor gets mad and spins tires throwing rocks on you.
 - a. The rocks damage your car ... break a window.
 - b. You may call the police, but you cannot get even by breaking his window.
 - c. We must realize our place ... God is the avenger.

E. However, you can't just "let it go."

S#41.

1. Where does it go when you let it go ?
2. It floats around in the recesses of your mind and comes back. (*like 7 spirits Lk 11*)
3. We must turn it over to God. ... **Mark 11**

CONCLUSION :

A. Question : Is forgiveness conditional or unconditional ? Yes.

S#42.

B. There are two kinds of forgiveness :

S#43.

1. **Mark 11** ... Forgiveness is universal, unconditional and never has to be invited.
2. You can't control the other person, but you can control yourself so forgive.
 - a. Release all claims to justice.
 - b. Be merciful and gracious.
 - c. It could mean salvation for your soul.
3. **Luke 17** ... Forgiveness is conditional upon a successful negotiation.
 - a. It cannot be given unless the offending party repents.
 - b. This forgiveness always waits to be invited; "*Will you forgive me.*"

C. Jesus is ready to forgive you in both ways.

S#44.

1. He is the offended party.
2. He has written a book (*bible*) explaining your transgressions against Him.
3. He is inviting you to repent so He can forgive you both now and ongoing.

INVITATION :

S#45.

**Will you : Repent of your transgressions
Confess your faith in Him
And surrender to Him in baptism.**

Lesson Text :

Eph. 4: 31-32

31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. **32** Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Luke 17: 1-4

1 He said to His disciples, "It is inevitable that stumbling blocks come, but woe to him through whom they come! **2** It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea, than that he would cause one of these little ones to stumble. **3** Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. **4** And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' forgive him."

Mark 11: 24-26

24 Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be *granted* you. **25** Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions. **26** [But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions.]

We will be comparing two verses :

Luke 17: 3 – Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

Mark 11: 25 – Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions.