

FORGIVE AND FORGET

A Lord's Flock General Assembly Topic

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Jesus reminds us that we are called to request and offer forgiveness. We have all been hurt and have hurt others also. He tells us that a forgiving heart is a characteristic of a disciple. Further, Paul reminds us, that everything we do, we do for the Lord.

Bible verses about forgiveness:

1. Hebrew 27:30—28:7

1.1. Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinners hug them tight. These are abominations which sinful people excel at. Let us give up hate and live by the Lord's command.

1.2. The vengeful will suffer the Lord's vengeance, for He remembers their sins in detail. Let us then offer forgiveness to others, and thus, avoid vengeance from the almighty God, Himself. Specifically, in marriage, the wife should not take revenge on the unfaithful husband. Marriage is a relationship between two forgiving individuals or else, they should not get married. It is not a relationship between two perfect persons. Everybody makes mistakes; we all have weaknesses and sinfulness.

1.3. Forgive your neighbors' injustice. Then, when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven. We are obliged to forgive so that our own sins will be forgiven as we pray for forgiveness. Moreover, Jesus forgives the forgiver.

1.4. Should a man nourish anger against his fellows and expect healing from the Lord? As we pray The Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us," implies that we must extend forgiveness to someone who has hurt us. Thus, we can expect miracle healing for ourselves and our family tree: emotionally, psychologically and physically.

1.5. Should a man refuse mercy to his fellows, yet ask pardon for his own sins? Jesus reminds us of the Golden Rule, "Do unto others, what you want others do unto you". Thus, being merciful, we will receive mercy and forgiveness for our sins.

1.6. If he who is but flesh cherishes wrath, who will forgive his sins? If we forgive others, we are

giving them another chance. Even before we realize that we have sinned, God has forgiven us. He is waiting for us to pray for mercy. But forgiving others helps to prepare our hearts to receive that mercy.

1.7. Remember your last days, set enmity aside; remember death and decay, and cease from sin. Someday we will die, therefore let us give up hate and live by the Lord's command.

1.8. Think of the commandments, hate not your neighbor; of the Most High's covenant and overlook faults. Instead of getting upset over our neighbor's fault, overlook and forget them.

2. Psalm 103:8

The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger and rich in compassion. Unforgiveness is like burning a bridge, that someday we need to cross, because of our weaknesses and sinfulness.

3. Matthew 18:21-22

Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times? Jesus answered, "Not seven times but seventy-seven times". In the Parable of The Unforgiving Servant, the wicked servant was punished, for not being merciful to his fellow servant. Thus, unless we sincerely forgive our brothers and sisters, we too will be punished (Matt.18:23-35).

CONCLUSION:

When we refuse forgiveness, our hearts are hardened. Hence, God's love will not enter. Forgiving will soften our hearts and we will receive the seed of mercy that will bear fruits in our lives.

REFLECTION:

1. What unforgiveness are you still harboring in your heart?
2. How did you overcome your difficulty in giving forgiveness?

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