

Power to Forgive

July 1st, 2012

Forgiveness of the human variety

It has made the choice to no longer hold the offense against the person, and it has chosen to stew about the grievance no more. It brings about a bland, non-feeling blankness of soul towards the offending person. It no longer hates, but it also doesn't love. This sort of forgiveness saves us from the deadly effects of resentment and bitterness, but finds nothing of the robust power of Christ in the forgiveness process. For after all is said and done, the fault is still remembered even though it is no longer resented.

Forgiveness of the Spirit variety

It not only frees the captive from the net of resentment, but it frees their fault from the net of one's remembrance. It is fault forgotten, removed from the equation of relationship. And Christianity doesn't offer neutrality, a bland, non-feeling blank soul response to the now forgiven soul, but rather, it offers kindness, warmth of being, tenderhearted forgiveness - it offers love. The forgiven, now becomes the object of love and specific prayer - with an honest God-deposited desire to see them triumph in Christ Jesus.

Cherishing the Sacrifice

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and

sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

1 Corinthians 11:27-32

The Dangers of Unforgiveness

Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: **and do not give the devil an opportunity.**

Ephesians 4:26-27

To whom you forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ; **Lest Satan should get an advantage of us:** for we are not ignorant of his devices.

2 Corinthians 2:10-11

The Principle of Heavenly Resistance

. . . God resists the proud, but gives grace unto the humble.

James 4:6b

God resists the unforgiving, but gives grace unto the forgiving.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors . . . For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye

forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 6:12,14-15

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owes. And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Should not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

Matthew 18:21-35

For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his

heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them. **And when you stand praying, forgive,** if you have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

Mark 11:23-26

The Grand Meadows of God's Grace

No walls, no barriers, no land mines

The Incident

A fault, a mistake, a stabbing, an accusation, an insensitivity, a hit, a forfeiture of trust, a lie, a robbery, a violation, an abuse - a something occurs.

The Manure

The disgusting inner junk of another person is deposited on your ground. You didn't ask for it - it's just there - a big truckload of it.

The Yellow Tape

The crime scene area is cordoned off for special attention; the evidence is evaluated, the act investigated, the manure pile perused.

The Decisive Moment

Aphiēmi [Ah-fee-ah-me]

To let go, let alone, let be, to leave, to go away leaving something behind

The Manure Shrine of Grievance

The territory is officially declared set-apart for mourning and woe. The place of the crime is officially logged into the court record of the soul as “hurt” and “wounded” property. A medical facility is instantly established to repair the soil - and thusly, using the manure provided, a structure is fashioned to cover the violated ground, to capture the smell of the crime, to carefully chronicle all evidence, to enable rumination on the hurt, and to premeditate revenge upon the perpetrator.

The Windowless Factory of Bitterness

In this manure hut, all light is cut off, so that the pain and hurt of the incident can be fully nursed. All light, rain, cleansing breezes, flowery fragrances, and outside perspective are removed in order to maintain a clear and undistracted focus on the offense. The ground inside the shrine quickly dies and the windowless, dark, depressing environment allows for the fast growth of a new sort of flower. Well, maybe it’s not a flower. It’s more a prickly bush, a spreading poisonous vine sort of thing. It’s called bitterness. And the darkened manure shrine is the perfect place for this bush, this vine, to spread. And it grows, offering a strange and addicting comfort to the shrine territory.

The Bitter Meadow

Bitterness is a spreading plant. It is never satisfied with what ground it has, it is always lusting for more property in the meadow. But for bitterness to grow and spread, it must have its root protected in a manure shrine. If it has a protected root, then it can spread from the manure hut, outward, into the rest of the meadow. And since bitterness is a bully plant (meaning it doesn’t share its ground with any other), it chokes out all plant life everywhere it spreads. So, soon, the entire meadow will be overcome with this strange black, prickly, poisonous, spreading bush.

Looking diligently . . . lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you,
and thereby many be defiled;

Hebrews 12:15

Human forgiveness

Dead Ground

All the manure is left in a pile untouched. It is deliberately not utilized, it is passed over, left on the spot. Instead of constructing a manure shrine of grievance, the manure is left in a pile in that location and the pile hardens and petrifies. The yellow tape is taken down, the event purposely moved past, and attempted to be forgotten. But the crime spot will never grow with beauty again. There isn't a shrine, but there also isn't a meadow. It's Dead Ground. Ground avoided. It's not ground that breeds bitterness and resentment, but it also doesn't breed love, affection, and tenderhearted intimacy. It's simply dead - an unpleasant and unfortunate piece of ground within an otherwise lovely meadow.

Divine Forgiveness

A Prayer Garden

Wounded territory becomes precious when God is allowed to handle grievance His way. For God specially marks off that part of the meadow as set-apart for His special grace. And thusly, He turns that spot into a sacred garden. He does this by taking what the enemy meant for evil and turning it to good. So, He tills the manure into that plot of land. He builds a quaint bench, a water feature, and inscribes a memorial stone with words like, "Here we remember the great forgiveness of our God - that it is He that has the power to forgive sins." And on the bench there is a special bronze plate that reads, "may God bless those who harm me and may I become God's instrument of grace and mercy to see them healed and to see them strong in Christ." The flowers in such a garden are the most beautiful in the entire meadow - they grow more robust and bloom year-round with a fragrance that blesses all who come near that precious, and now dearly loved, plot of land. The manure is no longer seen when looking upon this property, but rather, the glories of God's redemptive beauty.

Transforming the Enemy's Evil

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28

But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

Genesis 50:20

Forgiveness (the three saving reasons for employing it)

1. **Godward** - It makes way for the human life to enjoy God's ready forgiveness - God forgives us only to the degree that we forgive others.
2. **Manward** - It frees the soul, from both guilt Godward and bitterness and resentment manward - making a passageway for the tenderhearted love of Christ to flow.
3. **Satanward** - It evicts him from his place that unforgiveness lends him - his place from which he can effectively undermine and rot the human soul.

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Ephesians 4:32

. . . forgave I it in the person of Christ.

2 Corinthians 2:10b

The Power to Forgive is In Christ

forgave I it **in the person of Christ.**

2 Corinthians 2:10b

In Him we have . . . the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

Ephesians 1:7

In whom we have . . . the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:14

Power to do the Impossible

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

Matthew 5:44

Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

Luke 6:28

The discretion of a man defers his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.

Proverbs 19:11