

A Community Of Forgiveness

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The reason there are so many exhortations in the New Testament for Christians to love other Christians is because... the church itself is not made up of natural “friends”. It is made up of natural enemies. What binds us together is not common education, common race, common income levels, common politics, common nationality, common accents, common jobs, or anything else of that sort (that bind most other groups of people together). Christians come together not because they form a natural collocation, but because they have all been saved by Jesus Christ and owe him a common allegiance. In this light we are a band of natural enemies who love one another for Jesus’ sake. That is the only reason why John 13:34-35 makes sense when Jesus says: “A new command I give you – Love one another as I have loved you...”.

- D.A. Carson, *Love In Hard Places*

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.”

Matthew 18: 21-25

1. Forgiveness is costly to us
2. Forgiveness is relational between us
3. Forgiveness is required of us

10,000 talents: 1 talent was 20 years worth of a
day laborers wages

In today's numbers:

Average SF salary per year = \$82,000

X 20 years = \$1.64 million = 1 Talent!

X 10,000 = \$16.4 billion

100 denarii: 1 denarii was the daily wage of a
day laborer

In today's numbers:

Average SF salary per year = \$82,000

Divided by 365 days per year = \$225/day = 1 Denarii

X 100 = \$22,500

Forgiveness is a costly business

At the heart of every offense is the devaluing of something or someone

Forgiveness is Relational

What does it mean to forgive from the heart?

“This is how my Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from the heart
-Matthew 18:35

Jesus says, “If you do not forgive men their sins, your heavenly father will not forgive your sins.”

- This does not mean we can earn God’s forgiveness through our own forgiving but that we *can* disqualify ourselves from it. No heart that is truly repentant toward God could be unforgiving toward others. A lack of forgiveness toward others is the direct result of a lack of repentance toward God. And as we know, *you must repent in order to be saved!* (Acts 2:38). – Timothy Keller, *Forgiveness & Reconciliation*

“Father, forgive them; they don’t know what their doing.” – Jesus,
Luke 23:34

Moving the offender out of the camp of all humanity and
moving us out of the camp of all sinners.
– Miraslov Volf, *Free Of Charge*

But when that servant went out, he found he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. “Pay back what you owe me!” he demanded. – Matthew 18:28

Peter replied , “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.” - Acts 2:38

Forgiveness is required of us

“This is how my Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister *from the heart.*” – Matthew 18:35 *emphasis added*

You must forgive or you must be bitter. You can't be both. You.
Must. Forgive.

1. Forgive quickly - Matthew 5:23

“If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that you brother or sister has something against you leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.” – Matthew 5:23-24

2. Forgive regardless of fault Matthew 5:23-24 and
Matthew 18: 15-17

3. Forgive wholeheartedly Matthew 18:25

Are we supposed to forgive and forget?

Forgiveness does not remove consequence, but it
does remove vengeance.