

Freedom through Forgiveness

Matthew 18:21-35

None of us like to be hurt or taken advantage of. Unfortunately, this pain is inevitable. What can we do to free ourselves from the poison of bitterness and deep resentment? How can we become truly free when we experience deep disappointment at the hands of people who are sometimes cruel, selfish and unreasonable?

First of all let's look at what forgiveness is NOT:

1. Forgiveness is NOT **D** _____. It is not pretending that the hurt doesn't exist.
2. Forgiveness is NOT **C** _____ the person's wrongful actions. It is NOT saying, "It's okay."
3. Forgiveness is NOT **A** _____. It is not being afraid to deal with the problem.

Forgiveness IS a **G** _____ the victim gives the perpetrator in order to end the **P** _____. It is saying I choose to release another in order to bring an end to the (my own) pain.

Jesus tells a story about a servant who was granted complete forgiveness of an overwhelming unpayable debt by his master. Instead of being gracious the man then seeks out a fellow servant that owes him a mere pittance and treats him mercilessly. The master hears of this and sends the unforgiving slave to the torture chamber.

Three Principles we can use to Break Free from the Chains of Unforgiveness.

1. We must break the chains of **P _____.**

The man asked for patience that he might repay but the master had compassion and forgave him. –
Matt 18:26

2. The wrongs that we suffer at the hands of other human beings need to be seen against the debt that we owe a **p _____ Creator God. (Justice vs. Mercy)**

Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you? –
Matthew 18:33

3. If we do not, we will live in a **P _____ of our private pain.**

And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

“So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.” – Matthew 18:34,35

We withhold forgiveness in order to retaliate against another but it is we ourselves that drink the poison of our own making. Unforgiveness robs us of the joy of living and loving others. It cannot change what has already happened, but it will rob us of peace and joy and love in the years to come.

*Forgiveness is not given to **E** _____ the past, but to free up a **F** _____.*

Answers:

1. Denial; 2. Condoning; C. Avoidance
Gift; Pain

1. Pride; 2. Perfect; 3. Prison
Erase; Future