

# Praying, 'For We are Forgiving Everyone...'

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[ 0 : 00 ] think, doesn't it? Only a holy God. Who else could rescue me from my failure? Who else could offer his only Son?

Who else invites me to call him Father? Only a holy God. Only a holy God. We have a God who's forgiving, merciful, compassionate, and holy.

Only a holy God. We can do what our gospel declares. I love that third verse on that song.

Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to Luke chapter 11. Gospel of Luke chapter 11.

Jesus is teaching his disciples how to pray.

And we have been taking one line at a time. We've come to the fifth request, and actually we're taking two weeks on this one because this one's kind of a stumper, kind of a stopper, kind of a check.

[ 1 : 11 ] Right? So Luke chapter 11, we're looking at just, we're just going to read the first four verses in Luke 11. If you're able, please stand as I read Gospel of Luke chapter 11, verse one.

Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.

And he said to them, whenever you pray, or whenever you are praying, say, ask, Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come. Give us each day our necessary bread. And forgive us our sins, for we, ourselves, forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And lead us not into temptation. So it reads, let us pray for insight. Father, again, we ask that you teach us, you open our minds, and you give us understanding in this issue of forgiveness.

[ 2 : 25 ] So many Christians, so many people get stuck, get captured by unforgiveness, by bitterness and resentment and anger.

And so give us insight, Father, what it looks like, what this means to forgive others. We ask this in Christ's name.

Amen. Please be seated. Thank you. So forgiving others is maybe one of the most difficult things to do if you have been deeply hurt, paralyzed by bitterness and resentment, a pain that is so deep your trust has been broken, it feels irreparable, you're so angry and hurt you can't forgive.

You won't forgive. Many, many people get stuck here. Thousands of dollars are paid to therapists to deal with things because we get stuck.

It's a human thing. It's actually to do what only God can do. Right? To forgive. Debts.

[ 4 : 10 ] Big debts. So let me ask you, let me, tell me, what are some of those things? What are some of those issues? What are some of those hurts that are so hard to forgive?

What? Any? Maybe a divorce. A divorce. Okay. Somebody leaving, abandoning? Abandonment? Abandonment.

Abandonment. Big. Yeah. What else? Children. Betrayal. Betrayal. A broken trust. Someone you trusted has betrayed you.

Someone hurts someone in your family. Someone hurts someone else in your family. Someone hurts your children. Ooh. Being sold to a brothel as a young girl.

My goodness, right? By your aunt. By your, yeah, by your family. Talk about betrayal. Talk about betrayal. Yeah. so, so some of these things we experience can be deep.

[ 5 : 24 ] Can be huge. Hard. Hard. Especially the closer we are to somebody who then betrays us or hurts us, slanders us, abuses us.

So, this issue of forgiveness, that's why I wanted to spend a separate week on just this issue of our forgiveness. It raises many questions.

What does it mean if I don't forgive? Do I lose my forgiveness from God? what keeps me from forgiving? Is there any loopholes?

So, we're looking at this fifth prayer. Last time we looked at forgive us, the first part of the fifth prayer, verse four, forgive us our sins.

Now, we look at the second part. And this prayer, this fifth prayer, has three elements to it, I believe. Last time we looked at the first two. First of all, when we say forgive us our sins, there is an element of confession from a humble heart.

[ 6 : 40 ] We confess as 1 John 1 talks about, we walk in the light, right? We confess our sins, he's faithful to forgive us our sins. But then I think it involves secondly, a contrition, a repentance, a sorrow, not just agreeing and acknowledging that we sin, but then appealing for mercy, contrition from a broken heart.

And the example of that is Psalm 51, when David repented, right? And cried out for mercy from the Lord. And now, today we'll look at the third element, and this is that second part, for we ourselves are forgiving everyone.

So it involves confession, contrition, it involves compassion. It involves compassion from a merciful heart. So we're not just asking for forgiveness, but now we're giving forgiveness because we've been forgiven, because we experienced the forgiveness of God, our Father, we then forgive others. But that takes compassion from a merciful heart. It can't come from a hardened heart. It can't come from an angry heart. It can't come from a bitter heart.

So we go through that humble and broken and now this merciful. How do we get merciful to someone that does not deserve it? Right?

[ 8 : 09 ] So I want to answer a couple of questions. Come at this by means of asking questions. First big question is in what ways are forgiveness conditional?

In what ways is conditional? Because it's connected. Right? Forgive us as we forgive. Forgive us for we are forgiving. There's a connection.

It goes together. In Matthew's version, forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors. There we're asking, we're literally asking God to forgive us in the same way that we have forgiven others. So we're only asking for the measure of forgiveness that we actually give others. So that kind of makes it, kind of has a check on us when we pray that.

forgive us for we are forgiving. And now in Luke's version, which is a different setting where Jesus teaches us, the wording's a little different. Forgive us our sins for we are forgiving.

[ 9 : 23 ] Right? For we are forgiving. We're continually forgiving. Whereas in Matthew it's as we have forgiven, so we've already dealt with it, it's done. Whereas in Luke's translation it is for we are forgiving.

We are continually forgiving. In other words, it's a process. Both are true. One says we can forgive, we have forgiven something, but what happens? It comes back, doesn't it, sometimes? Or something else happens and it reminds us and ministers up on that stuff again.

So we have to kind of walk through it again. So in what sense is it conditional? So why do I say condition? Are we talking about a return to the law?

No. Jesus did not say forgive us because we are forgiving. He's saying as if we deserved it or earned it, forgive us for we are forgiving people, we deserve it, we're worthy.

He's not saying that, it's not a causal word, the word for is not a causal word, it's a clarifying word. it's a word that tests us, it's a word that examines us, it's a word that, because if we're saying that, forgive us our sins for we are forgiving, how do I say that?

[ 10 : 40 ] Do I mean that? Am I a forgiving person? It checks me, checks my heart as I'm praying, I have a grudge that I'm holding, am I withholding from someone else?

So note the clarification, this is about a relationship with the father, not, I've already been, the whole reason I can call him father is because I've already entered into a new relationship with him, I've already been saved, I've already been forgiven eternally, right?

In that, remember the word we used last week, what was it? Salvific, right? Did you use it this last week in the conversations?

Salvific, it's not about salvation, I've already got that, that's complete, that's a done deal, that's in Christ, right? That's eternal. This forgiveness I'm asking for on a daily basis is about relationship with my father, it's about clearing up the way of communication and channel with him, okay?

So the clarification is this, if I've been forgiven a debt that I can't pay, if he's forgiven me all that I've done, things that I don't deserve to be forgiven for, how can I withhold it from someone else?

[12:10] So I think that's what this prayer is doing, it's checking me. do I dare ask for forgiveness from the father when I'm unwilling to forgive?

So it's about compassion. Do I have the heart of my father at the root of it?

See, if I'm unforgiving, if I'm refusing to forgive consistently, refusing to forgive, I have to ask the question, am I truly a child of God? Have I truly been transformed?

Because if I'm a child of God, I've been transformed. I have a new heart, right? That doesn't mean I'm perfect, doesn't mean it's easy, doesn't, right? But I share the nature of my father.

And he's a forgiving God. that means his children are forgiving. Two.

[13:15] So do I share that? And this prayer, this fifth prayer we pray, forgive us as we have forgiven, or forgive us for we are forgiving, reminds us that Jesus is teaching, it's not just the kind of popular Christianity today is it's just me and Jesus.

It doesn't matter about other people, people are hypocrites, the church hurts people, so it's just me and Jesus. Jesus reminds us by this prayer, no it's not.

There are two relationships that are critical. There's a relationship I have with my father, yes that's central, that's important, but because I have that relationship with my father, I have a relationship with others, and my relationship with my father impacts the relationship I have toward others, because it's not just me and Jesus.

Because I know Jesus, because I have a relationship with the father, I'm his child, and so I act like the father. And my relationship with others affects my relationship with my father, because if I'm unforgiving of others, that's hindering my relationship with my father.

So Matthew 18, let's go over to Matthew 18, Jesus tells a parable, gives us a picture of this kind of forgiveness. It's a picture of how it looks, this parable is a picture of how it looks when we as Christians refuse to forgive others after we've experienced the forgiveness of God.

[15:02] Here's what it looks like. So Matthew 18, 21. Peter came up and said to him, Lord, how often will my brother sin against me and I forgive him?

How many times do I have to forgive? As many as seven times, and Peter's being generous there, he thinks he's, you know, he's really going to the max. bless his heart.

Jesus said to him, I do not say to you seven times, but seventy, seven times. What? Hell? Huh?

Therefore, the kingdom of God may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants.

There's a parable. Kingdom of heaven is like, it's a parable. This is what the kingdom looks like. A king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.

So we don't use that phrase today in terms of monetary talent. What's a talent? If you have a study Bible or whatever, you might have a little footnote that says, you know, ten thousand talents is, well, one talent is twenty years wages of labor.

[16:18] So ten thousand talents. I don't know if you calculate, Rob. It's approximately sixty thousand denarii. Thank you.

That's really helpful. Yeah. So ten thousand talents. One talent is twenty years worth of wages.

That means ten thousand talents is one hundred and ninety two thousand years to repay.

How do you get that big of a debt? Right. OK, so so Jesus is going, it's it's so big. It's just humongous. OK, so he owes that much.

Since he could not pay. No, no, no kidding. His master ordered him to be sold and his wife and children, all they had in payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, have patience with me and I will repay everything.

Really? Out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. Wow. Out of pity, out of compassion.

[17:28] But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. So there's your denarius. OK, again, what's a denarius?

Well, one denarius is one day's wage. So a hundred denarius would be a hundred days of work.

Now, that's not insignificant. That's a lot. That's over three months worth of work.

So he owed him quite a bit. It's good, but not compared to the other. And seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, pay me what you owe. So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him,

have patience with me and I will pay you.

But he refused and went, put him in prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed. They went and reported to their master all that had taken place.

Then the master summoned him and said to him, you wicked servant. I forgave you all that debt because you pled, you pleaded with me.

[ 18 : 35 ] And should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant as I had mercy on you? And in anger, his master delivered him to the jailers, literally the torturers, until he should pay all his debt.

Watch what Jesus says at the end of this. Application. Jesus says, so also my heavenly father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from the heart.

Ow. What? So will my heavenly father do to you if you do not forgive. What is it that the father will do?

He will deliver you to the torture. Does that mean I go to hell? No. No. Scripture doesn't teach that. Let me clarify by the meaning of the word torture. It means an examiner. It means one who elicits the truth by examination.

[ 19 : 54 ] Now, we can imagine torturing, you know, I'll get the truth out of you, right?

Waterboarding or something like that. Excuse me, Pastor. Yeah. I have a question in the type of Bible that I have on the Is It Study Bible.

But in the note, it said, we should always forgive those who are truly repentant. Is that a loophole? Okay. Yeah, that's a loophole a lot of people grab onto. I'm going to deal with that in a second. I'm going to answer that in a second. This prayer request isn't dealing with that. There are times we deal with that, but that's not what Jesus says here.

So, thank you. To be delivered to the torture means to be delivered to an examiner who elicits truth through pain.

So, here's the impact of this parable, okay? As I said, it's a picture of how it looks when we as Christians refuse to forgive others after we've been forgiven.

[ 21 : 02 ] We've already experienced forgiveness, and yet we go out and withhold it from someone else. What I've been forgiven is immeasurable. 192,000 years worth of stuff, stuff that I could never, never, ever repay.

I don't live that long. Right? And then, to not forgive something that has happened to me, a significant thing, 100 days wages, that's a significant debt.

That's hard. That's a lot. That's a, that's a bite. But by comparison, no comparison. Right? So, the master is right in saying, you know, should you not have had mercy on your fellow servant as I had mercy on you?

Shouldn't it pay forward? Right? If I've been forgiven, if I've been released from a debt that I cannot pay, if I've been shown mercy that I do not deserve, that I do not have the justification to withhold forgiveness, bitterness, to harbor bitterness and resentment, I do not have the justification, I'm trying to say that carefully, I don't have the justification to withhold it.

I may have the hurt that withholds it, right? I have the pain and the anger to withhold it, but I don't have the justification as a child of the heavenly father who has forgiven me the immeasurable debt.

[ 22 : 45 ] How can I stand before a holy God, a merciful God, and say, thanks for that, but I'm not doing the same thing. That's, that, that's the hard truth of this.

So, deliver to the torturers, what does that mean? So the father will do to you, what does that mean?

Doesn't mean you lose your salvation, that that would contradict scripture, it doesn't mean that, that, that you're going to hell, that would contradict scripture.

We have, we have eternal salvation in Christ. What I think it does mean is the father disciplined you. It's kind of like, remember what David prayed in Psalm 32?

You know, I, I did not confess, I did not acknowledge my sin, and the longer I held it in, what happened? Man, I'm, I'm started feeling miserable, and my bones, and my, you know, I'm weak, I'm dried up.

[ 23 : 49 ] Your hand was heavy on me. I think that's what's going on. There is a, there is an experience we have from the father. He has not abandoned us, but he will hand us over to a, an experience in our life that will thoroughly examine our unforgiveness.

It, we will experience difficulty in our relationship with the father, and in our life, we will not have joy, we will not have peace. We will be thoroughly examined through that painful experience.

And it's the father's goal, of course, not to shame us, but to convict us and to draw us back. Is that not right? Not to make us feel good.

But sometimes when we're so hard headed, when we're so hardened by, by what we've experienced that we get stuck. And so it, it, it, this is how the father may draw us out of that.

Doesn't sound fun, does it? Have you been there, by the way? Have you experienced that? Been a Christian a while, and there's no doubt you've been through some of this hard, hard stuff.

[ 25 : 08 ] So, in what way is it conditional? It's conditional in the sense that it's really about a test on my spirit. If I'm praying for forgiveness, is my spirit also forgiving?

And so it kind of checks me. Checks me. So there's a second question we need to explore. And I, and I've changed it from what was in the outline.

If you're looking at the outline, I think the question was, what would happen if I don't forgive? I'm changing the question to, to be, I think, more, more relevant. Not just what would happen if I don't forgive, but more rooted.

Why would we not forgive? Having been forgiven by the father, why would we not forgive?

Why is it so hard to let go? Why are we so paralyzed by our anger, by our hurt?

[ 26 : 13 ] Well, we're human. But why, if I have the nature of Christ, can't I let that go? Why do I get stuck? And I think, honestly, some people, they're so hurt in this that they're unable to let it go, and they don't even know how in the world they'd ever do it.

Right? They're just wrapped up in it. So let me try some answers here. Why would I not forgive?

One reason is maybe it's just too much.

It's too much. Because he says, what does it say? Back to Luke 11. Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves are forgiving who? Everyone.

Everyone? Really? Everyone. Isn't there a loophole here? And by the way, it says everyone.

It doesn't say everyone who repents. It doesn't say everyone who says they're sorry. It says, I simply am forgiving everyone who is indebted to me.

[ 27 : 20 ] To us. Period. Like Jesus on the cross. Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

They didn't ask for forgiveness. They didn't say they were sorry. He forgave them. It's like that.

There are other places. Later, if we ever get to Luke 17.

There he talks about if your brother repents seven times a day, you forgive him seven times a day.

So he does talk about that reconciling kind of forgiveness. This isn't about reconciliation.

This is only about letting it go. Reconciliation is another step. Okay. Okay. So everyone, we are forgiving everyone indebted to us.

What is debt? Well, it's something people owe you. It's something people owe you because they've taken something from you. Maybe they've slandered you or disrespected you so they've taken your honor.

[ 28 : 30 ] I've experienced that. As a pastor, I've experienced that. Slander. There was a point a few years ago, people were visiting from another church. Oh, we heard about you.

All right. Okay, great. Thought we'd come and see it was true. Or you get betrayed. You're lying. You're deceived.

And so they've taken trust. All kinds of things that someone might do where they owe you.

They've taken something from you and they continue to owe you. Right? We are forgiving everyone who are indebted, who are still indebted, who continue to be indebted to us.

In other words, they haven't repaid and they won't repay it. How do you forgive those people?

Those people that left here and slandered me never made it right.

[ 29 : 35 ] What do you do with that? Forgive them. Exactly. But that's what I'm saying. That's how you do that. See, it's not like, oh, it's all nice and cleaned up and wrapped up in a nice butt.

Okay? It's a little mess. So why would we not forgive? Well, it's too much. Everyone? Why would we not forgive? Here's another reason. It's too hard.

Always? We are forgiving. It's present tense. We are forgiving. We continue to forgive. We are just constantly forgiving people.

Really? That's too hard. What if, and that's the question, what if they don't repent or say they're sorry?

Well, that would be a lot easier to forgive then, wouldn't it? It just isn't that, it just isn't, it's wonderful when that happens. It's wonderful when that happens, isn't it?

[ 30 : 36 ] When we have real one another relationships in the body of Christ and we do, we confess to one another, we make things right. My experience in church in 40 years or whatever, pastoring, it has been, that's rare.

People just leave. Or they ignore you. They just, they don't want to do what the gospel calls us to do. Is this too hard? Okay.

So why do we do it? If it's not about forgive if they repent, if he's saying it's bigger than that, we forgive even if they don't repent, why are we doing it?

We're not doing it for them. We're doing it for me. I'm doing it for my soul. I'm doing it for my soul. Because if I withhold forgiveness, if I hold that grudge and that anger and that hope someday, what does that do?

Does it do anything to them? No, they don't even think about it probably. It hurts me. It hurts me.

[ 32 : 03 ] And by the way, this whole we are forgiving is not about reconciliation. It's not about trust. Okay. Forgiveness is the first step.

Reconciliation is another step. That's where I go. If it's a Christian relationship, that's where I go. And it's my brother. I need to make things right. We need to reconcile. We go through a process. And trust, that's a whole other level. Okay. That's a whole other level. If they've abused you, let's say, let's think of something horrible. Why do that? But to exaggerate the point, if someone abused your children, I forgive them.

I'll just let them, you know, babysit my children again. Right. No. No. Ridiculous, right? No. Trust has to be rebuilt. Amen. So forgiveness doesn't mean I trust them again.

I was in a denomination where I kept track in the front of my Bible the list of names of pastors who had affairs. And that denomination restored them within six months.

[ 33 : 08 ] And I'm thinking, what are we doing? Well, we're forgiving them. Well, that's great. Sure. But that doesn't mean we trust them.

They've broken trust. I mean, the secular the secular segment of society has higher standards than that.

A psychologist who had an affair with a client was banned for five years before he could even seek a license. and we let a pastor come in in six months?

Seriously? So, I'm just saying there's a difference between forgiveness and reconciliation trust.

Okay, that because that's sometimes where we get a little confused.

That's sometimes where, okay, if I'm forgiving them does that mean everything's okay? No, it means I've let it go. Everything okay? That takes more. That means, okay, if that's a relationship to be rebuilt, if that's a relationship that I continue to have, then, okay, I need to work at that.

[ 34 : 22 ] That's going to take some time. It takes two people to have reconciliation too, right? And it takes time to rebuild trust. Okay. So, why would I not forgive? Well, it's too much because I can't forgive everyone, can I?

It's too hard. It's always, always are forgiving. Here's another reason why we would not forgive because I'm too hurt. Because we're talking about people who are indebted to us, who owe us.

See, what if I'm so angry and hurt and paralyzed by resentment and bitterness that I just can't forgive? I think I'm talking to people here who really feel stuck there.

In their hurt, they can't. They're paralyzed. We can get there. We can get there. It can have been a long period of hurt.

It can be a deep, deep hurt. So, why would I not forgive?

[ 35 : 39 ] Because I'm too hurt. It's too deep. It's too big. Can't do it. Don't have the strength of resources. And what that does is cultivate bitterness in me and holds me captive, enslaves me to that ongoing thinking and restoring up anger.

So, what's the answer? So, let's look at Scripture. Ephesians 4, I think, is the regular, basic Christianity, Christianity 101, walkthrough, dealing with my sinfulness.

Ephesians 4, let me read it. Ephesians 4, verse 22, Paul's talking about, you know, we walk in a manner worthy of Christ, and he's talking about how now that we are following Christ, now that we have been changed, we no longer are like the Gentiles.

We're no longer walking the old way we used to walk. We're different people. We're changed.

Okay? So, here's what he says. So, how do I maintain that? What does that look like? And how

does this lead to the ability to forgive?

Ephesians 4, 22 says, put off your old self. Put it off. Which, what is that old self? The old man, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desire.

[ 37 : 18 ] That's the old man. We still have that. Until we go to heaven, we will still have that old man. We still have that old flesh nature. Ball and chain dragging around. It still drags me back into my old habits.

Okay? Still got that. So, I've got to put that off. And to be renewed in the spirit of your minds and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God and true righteousness and holiness.

Okay? So, that's the basic premise. And for the rest of the chapter in Ephesians 4, Paul's going to apply those principles to different issues. values. Okay?

But that's the concept. Put off, put on, and in the middle is the key. Because how do I just put off my bitterness? Hey, just put it off.

Yeah, easier said than done, right? How do I do that? And how do I just put on this forgiving attitude? be renewed in the spirit of your mind? I have to go back to square one.

[ 38 : 15 ] I have to go back to, before the cross, I have to go back to basics. Who am I?

Who is he? What has he made me? Okay? I have, that's, otherwise the whole put off and put on, I don't have a clue how to do that.

I don't, I can't do that. So, so, okay, so let's apply it. Therefore, so put on the new self. Therefore, having put away falsehood.

So here's the first example. Put off the old self. Put off falsehood. Put off lying and deceit. Put that off. Put away falsehood. Let each of you speak truth.

So don't lie, but speak truth. Put off and put on. For we are members of one another. Another example, and here's where we get to forgiveness. The first steps in forgiveness.

[ 39 : 13 ] Be angry and do not sin. All right. Just do, just do that. So, so our old man does what?

Be angry. Be angry and sin. Right? Be angry. Let it vent. Let it go. Let's just let it go. Because that's what my old man wants to do. My old man thinks is deceived into thinking if I vent that whole thing, if I just explode and I just do that, man, I'll feel better.

That's deceiving. No, I won't. All right. So be angry, do not sin. So, so Paul is saying there is a place for anger. Okay? Anger is on an emotion. I can't just not be angry.

That's an emotion. Emotions just happen. Feelings happen. I have to control my feelings. What I do with my feelings is an issue. But the fact that I get angry, that's normal. Okay?

It's natural. God gets angry. Jesus got angry. Okay? There's a righteous kind of anger. But don't sin. So in other words, I have to control it somehow.

[ 40 : 21 ] I have to limit it somehow. How do I limit it? He says, do not let the sun go down on your anger. So deal with it today. Don't let it fester. Don't let it. Don't let it. Don't put it off.

Why? What's he say next? Be angry. Do not sin. Do not let the sun go down on your anger. And give no opportunity to the devil.

Okay, what happens if I don't forgive? I give opportunity to the devil. Literally, I give a place. I give a foothold. And what's he going to do with that?

What does the devil want to do? What did Peter say? Be sober and alert? The devil, like a roaring lion, right? Seeking to devour.

Devour. What do you do? Hold the whole meeting and, you know, cast out things. What do you do? What does Peter say? Resist him. Just resist him.

[ 41 : 25 ] He's not that strong. He's crafty. You know, like Luther says, one little word will follow him. Not my word.

But if I'm angry and I sin and I let the sun go down, I let it harbor and fester, what happens? He gets a foothold. And then he, what does he do with us?

Man, he digs deep in that. He can make that anger grow and cultivate a bitterness. And he goes on, do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you are sealed for the day of redemption.

Don't grieve. So, when we're unforgiving, is God getting mad at us? No. Is God disappointed in us? No.

No. It's impossible. God cannot be disappointed. Please. He's all-knowing. He knows the end from the beginning. It's absolutely impossible for God to be disappointed. He was not disappointed that Peter would deny him three times, yay, six times.

[ 42 : 42 ] Sorry to throw that in there. He already knew he would do it. Did it grieve him? Yes. Did it hurt?

Yes. Can we disappoint God? No. Here he knows. He knows. Does he get mad? No.

He grieves. He hurts. It's a relationship. relationship. Okay? It's an intimate, real relationship. So, he's not writing that to threaten you.

He's writing that to motivate you. What will motivate me to really get grips with this hard issue? To deal with my anger? To deal with my forgiveness?

What will motivate me? Well, one thing is I don't want to grieve my father. I don't want to grieve the spirit. Another is, I don't want the devil to get a place.

[ 43 : 48 ] Okay? That's a motivating factor, not a threat. Okay? Are you with me? This is how Paul's bringing it. This is gospel good news. Okay?

This is helpful for you. He's helping us deal with the issues we deal with every day. Right? Put off, put on, renew your mind. So, then he gets to it.

Here we get to it. So, another example of putting off and putting on. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. There's that put off the old.

All that's part of the old flesh. Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, malice. That's all stuff that's wrapped up in unforgiveness. Okay?

Put it off. What do I put on? Put on kindness. What's the opposite of bitterness and wrath and anger? Kindness. Kind to one another. Tender hearted.

[ 44 : 46 ] Forgiving one another. There it is. As God in Christ forgave you. That's the new self. How do I do that?

How do I put off all the bitterness? Would I just do that as if I, you know, oh yeah, just check that box and just do that. I have to do that renewal process.

I've got to renew my mind. I've got to get in front of the cross. I've got to remember how he forgave me. See, what is the cure to unforgiveness?

If I'm so angry, hurt, and stuck, and paralyzed that I can't forgive? Well, the process here in Ephesians 4 is I put away some stuff.

How do I put it away? Well, it starts with what? Confession. I've got to acknowledge it first. I've got to admit it.

[ 45 : 56 ] I've got to get it out. Look at the Psalms. That's how David, that's how others dealt with their pain. They got it out. They expressed their anger.

They expressed their stuff. They got it out before the Lord. They pour out their soul. There is healing by confession before the Lord like that. Vent to him.

Because what happens if we confess? What happens? He cleanses and he forgets. I mean, he washes. That allows me to get to contrition and repenting.

Okay, I repent of this. I don't want to be unforgiving, Lord. So help me deal with it, right? And then forgive.

How do I forgive? How do I forgive? Well, I go through this process, but I forgive as Christ has forgiven you.

[ 46 : 55 ] Okay. I can't forgive until I look at the cross and I look at what he's done for me. I won't be able to do it. But when I do that, what's going to happen?

It's going to melt the hardness if I really look at that cross. And if I really look at the debts that he took, all of my pile of junk.

When I get that perspective, when I get that perspective, it kind of takes away that hardness, that resentment, that bitter, it's a healing thing.

It may not come right away because I may need to work through some stuff, but it will come. That's where I get the strength. That's the revealing of the mind part as well.

Right? As Christ has forgiven you, did you deserve his forgiveness? No. Do you see how great your debt is before him?

[ 48 : 03 ] Do you deserve to be treated better than Christ? Okay, here we go. I remember when I was going through depression and I was getting to the point of some healing and I was struggling.

I was struggling because I'd been hurt, I'd been betrayed, those kind of things, and I was really harboring that stuff and I couldn't let it go. And Christ made me look at the cross, made me think, because I was thinking, I don't deserve to be treated like this.

This is, you know, I don't want to be Jeremiah. I don't want to be one of the prophets. I don't want to be your servant. Oh, no, I do. And the thought hit me, well, are you being treated worse than Christ was treated?

Thanks. Yeah, you really have to bring that up. Right? Have you been slandered worse than he was? Have you been betrayed worse than he was? Have you been, you know, abused worse than he was?

No. Not even close. You follow him? Okay. So, let's wrap this up.

[ 49 : 37 ] Probably didn't touch on some questions out there. We'll get to that when we do the discussion time. But I hope we looked at some of the key ones. Bottom line, do you lack peace and joy?

Do you lack peace and joy? How you doing? Do you have some unresolved sin?

Something that you're not talking to the Father about? You're just trying to ignore, trying to, you know. Maybe you've got to hurt, you've been hurt by someone else that you just can't get past it.

You're stuck. Here's the simple but not easy process. Confess it. Confess it.

Just admit it. Get it out. Seek his cleansing. Humble yourself under his mighty hand.

[ 50 : 44 ] heart. Which means, okay, be honest with what I've been forgiven and what I'm holding out on someone else. And then ask.

If you're stuck, ask for help. Ask for wisdom. Ask, you know, search me. What is it that's making me stuck? I think if we really walk before the Lord, it would save us thousands of dollars in therapy.

Seriously. I'm not dismissing it. I think there's times for that. I've done that myself. There's time.

Spent two weeks in it, you know, this last summer. But so much the Lord and the Holy Spirit, the power of the Holy Spirit will do in us if we really, genuinely, humbly, brokenly come before it.

Yeah. Okay, let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for giving us this hard stuff. Because here's where our lives, the rubber meets the road, where our lives meet the real application of Christian truth.

What's real Christianity? What are the children of God really like? Well, Lord, I'm not sure there's a more obvious place than we forgive like you forgive.

[ 52 : 27 ] And that's the most unnatural thing for us to do. but that's what makes it the reality of the work of your Spirit.

So help us, Father, with this. I pray for folks that are stuck. I pray. I get it. If there's folks here today hearing this that are really stuck and really struggling, grant them, Father, that ability to go the next step.

Grant them that ability, Lord, just to start talking to you and venting to you. Get it out before you because that will enable them to go the next step. help us, Father, to see the real perspective.

Help us to see what we've been forgiven. And may that just break us and drive us to be more like Christ. This we pray in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen.