

Forgiving

Praise the Lord Saints of the Most-High God! Praise the Lord everybody! I love the Lord today and I hope and pray that each of you do as well. I'm so excited to be in the house of the Lord today. I love being in the house of the Lord. I love being with the people of God! I just love loving Jesus. I just love having a personal, intimate, eternal relationship with God!

I thank God and this congregation for allowing me to stand behind this anointed desk which we call a pulpit. I thank God for allowing me the privilege of being the Pastor of this church. Being a Pastor is not a right, it's a privilege, and I take very seriously my duty to prepare this congregation to fight the good fight of faith against the evil which resides in this world today!

Therefore I would that everyone who is in this building today stand with me at this time, if you are physically able, please stand and pray that God would anoint my lips as I bring forth the word of God as He has laid it upon my heart.

Let us pray.... (Spend as much time in prayer as the Lord leads)

I hope, and I believe, that what I have to say today will not only be exciting, but will also be life changing to those who hear, and understand the precepts that I will attempt to bring forth to you today. I encourage all of you to take copious notes and study them at a later time. **If we all could stand in honor of the reading of the word of the Lord at this time:**

Matthew 6:9-15 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. **10** Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. **11** Give us this day our daily bread. **12** And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. **13** And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. **14** For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: **15** But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

You may be seated.

Forgiving

As we can see from this passage known to all as the Lord's Prayer. If we desire to be forgiven of our sins by the Lord, we must first be willing forgive those who have sinned against us. How can we expect the Lord to do something for us that we're unwilling to do for others?

Therefore the first subject about which we'll speak is :

1. Forgiving Others

- Too many times we want to reserve the right to hold a grudge!
 - Too many times we want take revenge ourselves instead of giving it to God!
 - Too many times we want to see the person who offended us to suffer!
 - Too many times we forget our own imperfections!
 - Too many times we forget that we're sinners too!
 - Too many times we forget that we've sinned against all-mighty God!
 - Too many times we forget that we need to be forgiven too!
- + We need to remember that God knows about everything that's happening in our lives and that He loves us dearly.
 - + We need to remember that God will take care of those who abuse us.
 - + We need to remember the stress that seeking vengeance heaps upon our lives.
 - + We need to forgive others if we want to have peace in our lives.

It says in:

Matthew 5:44 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;

According to this passage, I believe that we're not even to have a bad attitude toward those who do us wrong. We're supposed to *love* souls as the Lord loves them. We're supposed to *earnestly* pray for the salvation of those who persecute us. We're supposed to pray *dutifully* for those who despitefully use us.

Forgiving

God has called us to be *servants*, and we'll never know whether or not we have a servants' heart until someone treats us like a servant. We who serve the Lord are supposed to serve others with a *willing* heart. We're servants of the Lord, and at times we can expect to be treated like a *servant* by someone who wishes to *lord* over us.....

We need to remember that Jesus, even while being mistreated by the Jewish leaders and the Roman soldiers, never directed a harsh word toward them. He suffered in *silence* like a sheep being led to the slaughter. He was *slaughtered* by them and yet He forgave them of their sins against Him.

Jesus was being *killed* and he forgave those very people who were killing Him at that same time. As Christians, we're to be *Christ like*, we're supposed to do things the way He did, we need to keep that in mind at all times.

Now let's look at:

Luke 17:3-4 Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. **4** And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

We aren't just to forgive our brother when he sins against us; we're required to forgive him seven times in a day. I know that sounds hard to do, but we're capable of doing it or the Lord wouldn't have commanded us to do it. But it could be worse right? *Absolutely* it could be worse; in fact it is worse!

We're told in:

Matthew 18:21-22 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? **22** Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

Seventy times seven works out to 490 times.... The inference being 490 times in a single day! You heard me, 490 times in a *single day*! Now that's a lot

Forgiving

of sinning for someone to do in order for you to not have to forgive them. In reality, I believe the Lord was just trying to make the point that you need to *always* forgive others when they sin against you.

You see, other people are going to sin against you because people are not perfect. A man who was very influential in my life once told me that as a pastor; one of the first things I would learn is that "people are pitiful". He then proceeded to remind me that as a preacher, I needed to remember that I'm a people too!

There are times as your Pastor that I'm going to fail you; there are times that I'm going to offend you. I will never do it intentionally, but it will happen, and when I do, please come and tell me so we can straighten things out! There are times that like all other people, I'm going to be pitiful, and I need you to forgive me when those times happen.

You see, there's a reason why God wants us to forgive others when they sin against us, it's because it will only destroy us if we hold a grudge. We need to turn all things over to God so that He can handle it for us. **It says in:**

Romans 12:17-21 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. **18** If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. **19** Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. **20** Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. **21** Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

We need to let God handle our relationship issues as they relate to those who have offended us, used us, or abused us. God's in control, there's nothing in this world that escapes His attention. I also believe that God's less concerned with our being offended than with how we handle it when we're offended.

God's fully willing and able to punish those who have abused their privileges of relationship with us; He doesn't need our help, nor does He require

Forgiving

our input. What He needs is for us to guard our hearts against a spirit of unforgiveness.

Judgment rests in the hand of God; it's not the place of man to take vengeance! Man is a vengeful creature; he always wants his pound of flesh. He wants to take that pound of flesh from where it will do the most damage. He wants to tear your heart out. He's not satisfied with an apology; man always seems to want blood.

God requires blood in payment for sins, and Jesus Christ has paid for those sins in full. Man requires payment that he's not entitled to, only God can judge men. Only God can require blood for payment of sins! Remember, as we just read in **Romans 12:19** it says: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." **Also, it tells us in:**

Colossians 3:12-13 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; **13** Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

If we're the elect of God:

- Then we need to be humble.
- Then we need to be meek.
- Then we need to be kind.
- Then we need to be forgiving.

We need to remember that as Christians, we are to emulate the attitudes that Jesus was model. There's a saying that is actually over hundred years old. It says: What Would Jesus Do? We need to keep that in mind when someone does us wrong. We need to remember the big picture; that we're living this life as a witness for Christ and not for our own pleasure!

Now we move on to our second topic as it relates to forgiveness:

Forgiving

2. The Spirit Of Unforgiveness

It says in:

Mark 11:25-26 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. **26** But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

This passage is similar to **Mathew Chapter 6**, and yet people just don't get the big picture. If we refuse to have a spirit of forgiveness, and we refuse to let go of the spirit of unforgiveness, God will not forgive us. God wants to forgive us, but we have to be willing to forgive others.

God will judge us guilty of all our sins if we refuse to forgive others. Remember, God will not allow sin to enter into the kingdom of heaven. If our sins haven't been forgiven, then we cannot enter into heaven. We will not be allowed to live forever with our Lord and our God. We will have condemned ourselves to live forever in the lake of fire where the flames are quenched not, and the worm dieth not. **If you don't believe me, listen to what it says in:**

Matthew 18:23-35 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. **24** And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. **25** 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. **26** The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. **27** Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. **28** But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. **29** And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. **30** And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. **31** So when his

Forgiving

fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. **32** 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: **33** Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? **34** And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. **35** So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

The man in this passage thought he'd pulled a fast one on the King. He was forgiven of a great debt that he had no possible way to repay. It was like 30 billion dollars in today's money. He probably thought he was the cat's meow. He probably thought he was a slick dude. He thought about a lot of things, but he even didn't realize what had just happened....

This man had no idea that mercy had just interceded on his behalf. He didn't realize that he should be thankful for what had just happened. He didn't realize that justice had set him free from a debt he couldn't pay. He didn't realize that he should go and do likewise.

After all that was done for him, he went out and grabbed a man by the throat that owed him twenty bucks. He had absolutely no mercy on this man when he was offered the same deal he himself had offered to the King. He grabbed that man and he dragged him to the prison, not realizing that he had just condemned himself to the same fate!

- How many times do we refuse to let it go and let the Lord handle it for us?
- How many times do we suffer the same fate as those who've sinned against us because we tried to handle it ourselves instead of letting the Lord take care of it for us?
- How many times do our adversaries get off the hook because we tried to take the place of God and inflict judgment ourselves?
- We need to always remember that judgment belongs only to God, and never to man?

Forgiving

It says in:

Luke 6:35-38 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil. **36** Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. **37** Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: **38** Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

We need to remember that what we sow, that shall we also reap. If we want to reap mercy, we must first sow mercy. If we want to be blest, we must first sow a blessing. If we want to be forgiven, we must first sow forgiveness. We will only receive mercy, blessings, and forgiveness in the measure that we sow them. Therefore be sure to always plant a bountiful crop!

Now to our last topic on this subject:

3. Forgiving Your Self

Sometimes we have more trouble forgiving ourselves that we do forgiving others. We expect more out of ourselves because we're Holy Ghost filled Christians, and we should. But we also need to keep in mind that Jesus Christ is the only human being to ever live a perfect and sinless life. **It says in:**

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

In other words, not just some of us have sinned. Not just the weakest among us have sinned. Not just the new believers among us have sinned. But every single human being on this planet has sinned at some time in their life. Some may be more effective than others at refraining from sin, but all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

However, there is good news! **It says in:**

Forgiving

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

When we confess our sins... Wow, what a concept! We have actually sinned and sin is not allowed into heaven. We listen to the devil condemn us. Yeah, that same guy who 3 seconds earlier was trying to talk you into committing that very sin which you just committed.

The devil will condemn you and tell you that Jesus will never forgive you. If you listen to him you'll become weak and you'll open yourself up to a greater attack on your soul. Don't listen to the devil! Not now, not ever! If you confess your sins to the Lord, He will forgive you and that's that! No ifs', ands', or but's' about it! **It says in:**

1 John 2:12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

You've been forgiven for His name's sake. If you've forgiven others, why can't you forgive yourself? If God has forgiven others, why wouldn't He forgive you? If God has forgiven you, why won't you forgive yourself? Are you better than God? Do you have the right to hold a grudge that God says you can't hold? Absolutely not! So if God has forgiven you, learn to forgive yourself and move on from there! **For it says in:**

Luke 7:47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

Jesus is telling us in this passage that they who have received much forgiveness, the same loveth very much. If God has forgiven you of much today, let His spirit rule and reign in your heart and life. Forgive yourself, forgive others, fellowship the Holy Ghost, and watch God work a miracle in your life!

Finally, as we close, it says in:

Forgiving

Philippians 3:13-14 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, **14** I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

According to this passage, not only do we need to forgive ourselves, we need to forget those things which are behind! Looking back only makes for crooked furrows. We want to walk down the straight and narrow with the Lord, and we don't want to leave crooked furrows for others to follow! Therefore let us leave behind our past, and move forward each and every day toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus!