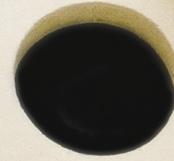


When Forgiveness Doesn't Make Sense

Forgiveness on Trial

MATTHEW 18:23-34



Introduction: There are plenty of logical reasons NOT to forgive those who have hurt us. Today we are going to explore some of those reasons before we look at the strongest arguments FOR forgiving others.

I. The Case Against Forgiveness

A. "Forgiveness Denies the **Seriousness** of Sin."

Proverbs 17:14 "The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so abandon the quarrel before it breaks out."

Proverbs 19:11 "A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression."

B. "Forgiveness Lets People Off the **Hook** Too Easily."

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C. "Forgiveness Places Too Much **Responsibility** On the Victim."

D. "Forgiveness Is **Unfair.**"

II. Understanding Forgiveness

A. What Forgiveness Is Not...

1. Forgiveness is not **denying** the reality of our pain.
2. Forgiveness is not letting our **offender** off the hook.
3. Forgiveness is not **unfair.**

B. What Forgiveness Is...

1. The definition of forgiveness

Luke 7:41-42 ⁴¹ "A certain moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. Which of them therefore will love him more?"

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2. The components of forgiveness

- **Admitting** that a person has wronged us.
- **Recognizing** that person owes us for their offense.
- **Surrendering** our right to settle the score ourselves.

III. The Case For Forgiveness

Matthew 18:23-34 “²³For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a certain king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴And when he had begun to settle them, there was brought to him one who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵But since he did not have the means to repay, his lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment to be made. ²⁶The slave therefore falling down prostrated himself before him saying, ‘Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.’ ²⁷And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay back what you owe.’ ²⁹So his fellow slave fell down and began to entreat him, saying, ‘Have patience with me and I will repay you.’ ³⁰He was unwilling however, but went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed. ³¹So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened. ³²Then summoning him, his lord said to him, ‘You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you entreated me.’ ³³‘Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him.”

A. Forgiveness Is Often the Only Way To **Settle** a Debt.

Matthew 5:38-39 “³⁸You have heard that it was said, ‘AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.’ ³⁹But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

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B. Forgiveness **Frees** Us to Get On With Our Life.

Hebrews 12:1-2 ¹“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

C. Forgiveness Is an **Antidote** to Needless Suffering.

Hebrews 12:15 “See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;”

D. Forgiveness Is the **Obligation** of the Forgiven.

Ephesians 4:32 “And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”

Conclusion