

Volume 5, Day 10: Do You Have Trouble Forgiving?

There are several reasons for which you prefer not to forgive those who have used, misused or abused you. Perhaps you believe that your forgiveness condones their behavior. Possibly you believe that your forgiveness gives them permission to do it again. Maybe you think that forgiving them will put others at risk of their evil intentions. You might even want them to suffer more than they have made you or others suffer. All of these thoughts are as normal as breathing! Yet Scripture declares prolifically the benefit of forgiveness.

Consider for a moment just how much you might, in ways you do not recognize, have behaved from time to time in the same evil manner. Consider that even God Himself is willing to forgive any and all who will confess their criminality before Him for His absolution. And consider the final moments of Jesus' crucifixion. While His accusers jeered at Him from the foot of the cross, He prayed, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing." Could it be that you think that you are more deserving of forgiveness than your perpetrators? And is it possible that they (and you) did not realize what they were doing when they committed crimes against others?

Maybe it would help if you looked at the Gospel in this manner. The Gospel is the essence of God's **paying forward** the punishment for your sin (evil against others) to Jesus to accommodate both justice and mercy for all spawned by love. If the Gospel is about grace, it is about a love so unconditional toward you that you not only do not suffer the punishment you deserve, but also you are granted an inexhaustible number of second chances.

So, ask God to dispense to your starving soul the nutrients needed in order for you to desire the same grace you received to be granted to your fellow man. The Gospel does not remove the consequences of sin (relationship crimes), it simply provides a means by which the full punishment for all of our crimes have been served. And only God, in the person of Jesus, can do that!

My Confirming Scriptures and Aligning Experiences:

DEEPER Every Day -- John Henry Alan