

FORGIVENESS FROM GOD? WELL MAYBE

Matthew 6:14-15

Introduction: This passage of scripture is an "eye opener" for many who think that God quickly "forgives" any Christian who comes to Him and asks for forgiveness. God will not forgive anybody who has an unforgiving heart. God makes it clear that forgiveness comes only where forgiveness is found in the heart of the one asking for forgiveness. This is a truth that is often unknown or ignored by God's own children.

I. TO BE FORGIVEN, ONE MUST HAVE FORGIVEN

1. Some attitudes toward forgiveness:

- The Doubter: God might be but it doesn't really matter. Do whatever it takes to get along. Needing forgiveness from God is a far fetched idea anyhow.
- The Conscience Stricken: One who knows little if anything about God, yet is deeply concerned about guilt and forgiveness and prays over and over to "anybody up there" but no peace comes.
- The Social Religionist: This one is sometimes aware of a need of forgiveness and occasionally "confesses" to the "grandfather in the sky, God" but doesn't know God personally.
- The Mature Believer: One who truly knows his/her sinful self and the great need for God's forgiveness and tries to live with daily confession and repentance.

2. Others must be forgiven by the one asking for forgiveness:

- Jesus understood that His children knew that they need forgiveness as they seldom did their best, often came up short, always strayed into forbidden areas, etc.
- The greatest thing in this world is to be forgiven and restored to fellowship with God.
- The **only** way to be forgiven and restored to God is to forgive others.
- Forgiving others means several things:
 - do not judge or censor
 - do not become bitter or hostile
 - do not plan for revenge
 - do not harbor hard feelings
 - do not talk about, gossip, or join in rumor spreading
 - do not rejoice when troubles and trials come to others
 - love and pray for that person
- Bad feelings toward another person is in God's eyes a **sin**.

II. REFUSE TO FORGIVE AND REMAIN UNFORGIVEN BY GOD

- 1. To pray for forgiveness with ill feelings toward another is hypocritical:**
 - It is asking God to do something for you that you will not do for someone else.
 - It proves that one is not right with God to begin with.
- 2. Bad feelings (unforgiveness) shows that that person does not really know the true nature of God or of mankind.**
- 3. Bad feelings (unforgiveness) shows that person to be self-righteous.**
- 4. Bad feelings (unforgiveness) shows that that person has not taken the necessary steps in order to be forgiven by God for his/her own sins.**
- 5. Bad feelings (unforgiveness) shows that that person is living by Satan's standards and not by God's.**

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Any person who holds bad feelings (unforgiveness) against others has not looked at his/her own sins.**
- 2. Bad feelings (unforgiveness) causes that person problems mentally, emotionally and even physically.**
- 3. The answer to getting sins forgiven is Jesus:**
 - Jesus can reunite the two separated by unforgiveness.
 - Jesus can break down that wall between the two.
 - Jesus can remove all that is wrong.
 - Jesus can give peace to both.
 - Jesus can restore access to God.
- 4. God will not forgive His children who are not forgiving each other.**
- 5. Is there someone you are having trouble forgiving?**
 - God will not hear you until you have gone to that person or those people and tried to make things right, thus forgiveness.
- 6. Any Christian who does not forgive, no matter the circumstances, is disobedient to God and God will not answer any prayer of that unforgiving Christian.**