



Suicide, Anxiety, & Depression

(The Gospel changes everything)

Part 6

We cannot move on from anger without settling on forgiveness. While anger is a normal human emotion, forgiveness is not. We seem hard-wired to hold a **grudge**! However, unforgiveness sits at the base of much of our depression, anxiety, fears, and angry outbursts. We said last time that our anger stems from the feeling that we have been mistreated and deserve better. Unforgiveness goes a step further. It says, I have the right to hold this offense over you as a form of **revenge**! We ended last time noting that all vengeance belongs to God. By refusing to let go, we harm ourselves more than the other person, as we're stuck in the past. Unforgiveness and the bitterness that always follows are like a time machine that always relives past hurts. Have you ever known someone who returns to the same subject or events every time you talk with them? They likely have unforgiveness/bitterness in their hearts.

Wisdom in the area of forgiveness from the Proverbs:

- **Proverbs 12:16**; *"A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult."*
- **Proverbs 19:11**; *"A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense."*
- **Proverbs 24:17-18**; *"Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice, or the Lord will see and disapprove and turn His wrath away from him."*

What if there were no **accountability**? No legal system? No police? No army? What if the threat of punishment were removed? How do you think people would treat one another? In our society, people are restrained by the laws of the land, and there are punishments for crimes. Even the government's judicial system sees the need to mediate between the two parties.

What about the Church?

- The Church should be a **holy example** of the forgiveness of God. Christians are those who have been forgiven much and, in turn, should forgive much.
- Instead, most churches are split into factions that quietly wage war for influence against one another. These smoldering offenses eventually erupt in disunity and church splits.

Turn Luke 15:11-32: Parable of the Prodigal/Lost Son

- In this familiar story, we often focus on the love of the Father and imagine ourselves as the son. While those points are certainly valid, this story has much to say about forgiveness. In fact, this story contrasts biblical forgiveness and human unforgiveness.
- **First, see the son's lack of respect; unforgiveness breeds disrespect.**
 - For his **father**, still alive, the patriarch, who owes him nothing.
 - For his **family**, he cares nothing for their name and reputation.
 - For his **brother**, the eldest, his position, & the workload he will incur in his absence.
 - For the **inheritance**, the work, the stewardship, the prudence/planning.
 - For **himself**, as he spends his money on parties, wild living, and prostitutes.
 - For his **homeland**, he travels to a foreign land; home is not good enough.
 - For his **God**, shows no concern about the right/wrongness of his actions, no fear.
- **Verses 20-22; an example of godly forgiveness**
 - The Father is filled with **compassion**.
 - The Father is filled with **joy**.
 - The Father is filled with **love**.
 - The Father expresses his love in **gifts & celebration**.
- **Verses 25-30; the ungodliness of unforgiveness**
 - The brother is filled with **questions**.
 - The brother is filled with **anger**.
 - The brother **denies** his **approval**/presence.
 - The brother **defends** his **bitterness**.
 - The brother **defends** his own self-**righteousness**.
 - The brother attacks the Father's **forgiveness**/love.
- **Verses 31-32; the wisdom of forgiveness**
 - The Father assures the eldest son of his love.
 - The Father assures the eldest son's place/inheritance.
 - The Father assures the eldest son of his character/intentions.

Turn to Matthew 18:15-17; forgiveness always seeks resolution and restoration.

- **Verse 15:** show the offender his **fault**.
- **Verse 16:** if unrepentant, show the offender his **fault** with **witnesses**.
- **Verse 17:** show the offender **church discipline**, as a last resort.

Turn to Matthew 18:21-35; God's treatment of unforgiveness.

- Peter asks, "...*how many times must I forgive my brother...*" "*Up to seven times?*"
- Jesus responds, "*seventy times seven.*" (490?).
- Jesus then details the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant (vs. 23-34).
- God's mercy, once rejected, is **just**, but **swift**, & **serious**.
- **Vs. 35:** "*This is how My heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.*"
- **Matthew 6:14-15;** forgive or you will not be forgiven.
- **Read Colossians 3:13-14;** we're commanded to forgive as He forgave us with love, and unity in mind.



Suicide, Anxiety, & Depression

(The Gospel changes everything)

Part 6

We cannot move on from anger without settling on forgiveness. While anger is a normal human emotion, forgiveness is not. We seem hard-wired to hold a _____! However, unforgiveness sits at the base of much of our depression, anxiety, fears, and angry outbursts. We said last time that our anger stems from the feeling that we have been mistreated and deserve better.

Unforgiveness goes a step further. It says, I have the right to hold this offense over you as a form of _____! We ended last time noting that all vengeance belongs to God. By refusing to let go, we harm ourselves more than the other person, as we're stuck in the past. Unforgiveness and the bitterness that always follows are like a time machine that always relives past hurts.

Have you ever known someone who returns to the same subject or events every time you talk with them? They likely have unforgiveness/bitterness in their hearts.

Wisdom in the area of forgiveness from the Proverbs:

- **Proverbs 12:16**; *"A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man **overlooks** an insult."*
- **Proverbs 19:11**; *"A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to **overlook** an offense."*
- **Proverbs 24:17-18**; *"Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice, or the Lord will see and disapprove and turn His wrath away from him."*

What if there were no _____? No legal system? No police? No army? What if the threat of punishment were removed? How do you think people would treat one another? In our society, people are restrained by the laws of the land, and there are punishments for crimes.

Even the government's judicial system sees the need to mediate between the two parties.

What about the Church?

- The Church should be a _____ of the forgiveness of God. Christians are those who have been forgiven much and, in turn, should forgive much.
- Instead, most churches are split into factions that quietly wage war for influence against one another. These smoldering offenses eventually erupt in disunity and church splits.

Turn Luke 15:11-32: Parable of the Prodigal/Lost Son

- In this familiar story, we often focus on the love of the Father and imagine ourselves as the son. While those points are certainly valid, this story has much to say about forgiveness. In fact, this story contrasts biblical forgiveness and human unforgiveness.
- **First, see the son's lack of respect; unforgiveness breeds disrespect.**
 - **For his** _____, still alive, the patriarch, who owes him nothing.
 - **For his** _____, he cares nothing for their name and reputation.
 - **For his** _____, the eldest, his position, & the workload he will incur in his absence.
 - **For the** _____, the work, the stewardship, the prudence/planning.
 - **For** _____, as he spends his money on parties, wild living, and prostitutes.
 - **For his** _____, he travels to a foreign land; home is not good enough.
 - **For his** _____, shows no concern about the right/wrongness of his actions, no fear.
- **Verses 20-22; an example of _____ forgiveness**
 - The Father is filled with _____.
 - The Father is filled with _____.
 - The Father is filled with _____.
 - The Father expresses his love in _____ & _____.
- **Verses 25-30; the _____ of unforgiveness**
 - The brother is filled with _____.
 - The brother is filled with _____.
 - The brother _____ his _____/presence.
 - The brother _____ his _____.
 - The brother _____ his own self-_____.
 - The brother attacks the Father's _____/love.
- **Verses 31-32; the _____ of forgiveness**
 - The Father assures the eldest son of his love.
 - The Father assures the eldest son's place/inheritance.
 - The Father assures the eldest son of his character/intentions.

Turn to Matthew 18:15-17; forgiveness always seeks _____ & _____.

- **Verse 15:** show the offender his _____.
- **Verse 16:** if unrepentant, show the offender his _____ with _____.
- **Verse 17:** show the offender _____, as a last resort.

Turn to Matthew 18:21-35; God's _____ of unforgiveness.

- Peter asks, "...*how many times must I forgive my brother...*" "*Up to seven times?*"
- Jesus responds, "*seventy times seven.*" (490?).
- Jesus then details the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant (**vs. 23-34**).
- God's mercy, once rejected, is _____, but _____ & _____.
- **Verse 35:** "*This is how My heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.*"
- **Matthew 6:14-15;** forgive or you will not be forgiven.
- **Read Colossians 3:13-14;** we're commanded to forgive as He forgave us with love, and unity in mind.