

Power to Forgive.

Matthew 18:21-35 Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?”²² Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.²³ “Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants.²⁴ When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.²⁵ And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made.²⁶ So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’²⁷ And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.²⁸ But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe.’²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’³⁰ He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt.³¹ When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place.³² Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me.³³ And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt.³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

Matthew 6:12-15 (From the Lord’s Prayer) ... and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. 14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

1. Change their profile picture. (The Lord has done that with you.)

Ezekiel 36:25-26 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Psalms 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Zechariah 3:4 And the angel said to those who were standing before him, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” And to him he said, “Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.”

2. Change your feelings about them. (The Lord has done that with you.)

Zephaniah 3:17 The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.

Psalms 103:13 As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.

3. Surrender your right to get even. (The Lord has done that with you.)

Matthew 5:44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

Romans 12:14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Luke 23:34 And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

Acts 7:60 And falling to his knees Stephen cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In preparation for this message Pastor John is grateful for the insights of Lewis Smedes, Charles Spurgeon, Paul Thigpen, Corrie ten Boom and John Bettler.



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