

4-16-2023, COTR Texarkana

Title: The Reset Button

Purpose: Provoke people to practice Biblical forgiveness when we've been hurt, wronged, or offended.

Spiritual Truth: We can restore broken relationships by hitting the reset button of forgiveness.

Text: Colossians 3:13

Topic: Forgiveness, Relationships, Offense, Restoration

Series Title: Building Relationships that Last

Series Purpose: Provoke people to build healthy relationships that can last a lifetime by embracing Biblical principles.

The Reset Button

I. Introduction

A. Before Easter we took a month to talk about revival in America. We've had a taste at COTR. I've seen a greater desire for worship, more people at prayer meetings, families are reconciling, 155 people made steps to Christ and we had 3,020 at easter services. This sounds like revival to me. Let's do our part to make it the new normal.

B. Now we'll continue the series, 'Building Relationships that Last'. I want to help you build healthy relationships that can last a lifetime by embracing Biblical principles. We talked about our words and relationship bombs that can destroy relationships.

C. Text [Col. 3:13 (NLT) Make allowance for each other's faults, and **forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.**]

D. Video¹¹: What happened? How can people in conflict get along again. It's as if a reset button was hit and the relationship was restored. // If your computer locks up we restart it and usually fixes the problem. Everyone gets hurt, wronged, or offended. But we can heal broken relationships by hitting the reset button of forgiveness. Today we'll ask and answer questions about forgiveness.

E. Title: The Reset Button *series 73 - 2 parts 1) God / we do we forgive*

II. What did Jesus say about forgiving people?

A. [Mt. 6:14-15 (NLT) "**If you forgive** those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. 15 But **if you refuse to forgive** others, your Father will not forgive your sins.] Jesus wants us to forgive people who hurt, offend or do us wrong in the same way He has forgiven us.

1. When God forgives us, it is unearned, undeserved, and freely available. When God forgives us, the issue is over; He doesn't bring it up again and again. He expects us to do the same to people who treat us bad.
2. Jesus said we have no right to seek forgiveness for our sins if we withhold forgiveness from others. If we say, "I'll never forgive you", we have forgotten our own sins because we want to punish the person who wronged us.⁵
3. Do I want God to forgive me when I do wrong? Then I must forgive others.

✓ III. ? What does it mean to forgive someone?

A Def. forgive: to wipe away the guilt for the bad things done to me;¹ to no longer see the wrong, put the wrong behind our back. ^{Legal did} ^{spiritual} ^{11's} ⁴ eg video

1. Forgiveness is like pardoning a guilty person.² Governors and President have a reset button; it's called a pardon. Def. pardon: to use executive power to forgive a person convicted of a crime, thus removing any remaining penalties or punishments and preventing any new prosecution of the person for the crime. A pardon strikes the conviction from the books as if it had never occurred, and the convicted person is treated as innocent.¹⁰ Obama pardoned 212, Trump 143.¹² Us?
2. Forgiveness doesn't mean wrong wasn't done or it's erased from our memory, but forgiveness pardons the guilty² and resets the relationship.

IV. ? Practically, how do we forgive someone?

A. How do I "forget the wrong," "no longer see the wrong," "put the wrong behind my back"? For me it starts in prayer: (1) I talk to God and tell Him how it made me feel. (2) I make myself remember how God has forgiven me when I didn't deserve it. (3) I make a choice to turn justice and punishment over to God. (This doesn't mean Christians can't be involved in legal, civil actions when wrong is done.) (4) I say out loud to God and myself, "Tom, I forgive you." (5) Hardest! I bless them. [Luke 6:27-28 (NLT) ...I (Jesus) say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. 28 Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you.] E.g., me, a pastor@stoplight. (6) I ask the Lord to take away the pain and hurt. Pic notes from app 2 page

V. ? Is forgiveness a 1-time event or a process?

A. Often, it's not a 1-time prayer. The deeper the pain the harder it is to ^{pick} /forgive and release the guilty. When the memory comes back in my mind and the knot is in our stomach, we hit the reset button again, i.e., repeat the

steps of forgiveness. e.g., me reaching out in a restaurant to someone that offended me. It's hard to hate someone when we act like this.

1. If we keep going through the process of forgiveness the pain and even the memory will disappear.

VI. ? What happens if we refuse to forgive?

A. Mt. 18:23-35 (NLT)...the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money.... 24...one of his debtors...owed him millions of dollars. 25 He couldn't pay, so his master ordered that he be sold...to pay the debt. 26 "But the man...begged him, 'Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.'" 27 Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt. 28 "But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He demanded instant payment. 29 "His fellow servant...begged... 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it...30 But his creditor...had the man...put in prison...32 Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, 'You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. 33 Shouldn't you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?' 34 Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt. 35 "That's what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart."

1. My natural desire is for mercy for me and judgment for you. If I act on this impulse God's grace will be lifted from my life and I'll reap the judgment I sow.

B. ? How do I know if I've forgiven someone? The memory may still be in our head but the knot in our stomach, the anger, our emotional outbursts, obsessing about getting even and our punitive behavior are gone because we've hit the reset button.

VII. Conclusion: Forgiveness helps us

A. Samantha's testimony: I want to share my story about my relationship with my father and the power of forgiveness. My mom told me I was 2 years old when he came to visit us the last time and then she never heard from him again. She tried to find him, but he didn't want to be found. Because I was so young, I had no memories of him, but his absence left a huge void in my life that I desperately tried to fill. I became promiscuous, craved male relationships and found my worth in what I could physically provide

NOTE on share IP others

them. In 2005, I was 21 years old and, I found my dad. I decided to meet him and tried to have a relationship with him. His idea of relationship was giving me money, but I wanted his time. Our relationship was not the perfect reconciliation I had dreamt about. When it came time for me to get married, he once again broke his promise and didn't show up to walk me down the aisle like he said he would. After that, I didn't speak to him for 6 years, until I got a phone call that he had had a massive stroke. His health continued to decline, and **I knew that God was telling me I had to forgive him.** I wanted to be obedient. I knew that **forgiving him wouldn't change the past, but I needed to be set free from the anger and bitterness that I had held onto for over 30 years.** In 2016 he suffered a second massive stroke. I made the trip to California and for 3 days I held my father's hand while machines kept him alive. I don't know if he could hear me or not, but **I told him that I forgave him and that I loved him. I spoke those words out loud and in that moment I was released from the bondage I had allowed myself to be in because of my unforgiveness.** When we unplugged the machines and he took his last breath on this earth, I had such peace in my soul. That peace only came after I was obedient to the Lord. **I hope this story can help someone who needs to forgive, who needs to be set free from bitterness and anger.**

1. Sometimes the reset button restores the relationship and sometimes it heals us. He did her wrong multiple times; he never asked her to forgive him; she was hurting and justifiably so, but she chose to forgive him. The reset button of forgiveness healed Samantha, and it will work for us, too.

VIII. Response

- A. Summarize the steps to forgiveness: (1) Talk to God and tell Him how it made you feel. (2) Remember how God has forgiven you when you didn't deserve it. (3) Make a choice to turn justice and punishment over to God. (4) Say out loud to God and myself, "Tom, I forgive you." (5) Do good to them; bless them, pray for them. (6) Ask the Lord to take away the pain and hurt.

B. Souls

- IX. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

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9. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55CHf1YaW2U> shorten to about 30 seconds
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11. <https://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/50856/forgiveness>
12. Pewresearchcenter.org

X. Supplemental material

A. Video⁹: Pressing a reset button on an iPhone.

B. ~~We need~~ God to forgive us

1. ~~Why do we need God to forgive us?~~ Sin separates us ~~from~~ God and causes judgment in this life and for eternity. Adam's sin affected us all: [Genesis 3:24 (ESV) **He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.**] Romans 6:23 (ESV) **For the wages of sin is death...**] Revelation 20:12–15 (NLT) I saw the dead... standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done... 15 And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.] We need forgiveness from sin because sin causes people to die and go to hell.

Everyone is guilty of sin. Nobody wants to experience eternal judgment, and everybody wants a real relationship with God. Forgiveness is the antidote for sin.

2. ~~What happens to our sin when God forgives us?~~ [Psalm 103:12 (NLT) **He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.**]

Forgiveness means God erases our sin; He removes the guilt and consequences for sin.

c. ~~How do we receive forgiveness from God?~~ (1) ~~We believe in Jesus;~~ [Acts 10:43 (ESV) To him all the prophets bear witness that **everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.**]

Forgiveness is available because of the sacrificial, substitutionary death of Christ. What ~~Jesus~~ did on the cross makes Christianity different from any other religion. (2) ~~We ask:~~ [1 John 1:9 (ESV) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to **forgive** us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.] Lord's prayer [Mt. 6:9–12 (NLT) Pray like [Acts 15:36–41 (NLT)...Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's go back and visit each city where we previously preached...to see how the new believers are doing." 37 Barnabas agreed and wanted to take along John Mark. 38 But Paul **disagreed strongly**, since John Mark had deserted them in Pamphylia... 39 **Their disagreement was so sharp that they separated.** Barnabas took John Mark with him and sailed for Cyprus. 40 Paul chose Silas...41 Then he traveled throughout Syria and Cilicia...] Later, [2 Timothy 4:11 (ESV) Luke alone is with me. **Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.**]