

THE ART OF LIVING THE FORGIVEN LIFE PART 1

**Therefore,
there is now no
condemnation for
those who are in
Christ Jesus,**

Romans 8:1



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STAND FIRM IN FORGIVENESS

I am going to say something in faith that may shock and move you . If you listen and speak out and believe what I say today and move through with it you will never live in any kind of unforgiveness ever again. You will stand firm and you will live a life full of forgiveness based on that love and Forgiveness Jesus showed us. Do you sometimes feel angry at others or dirty and unloved in yourself. Do you get angry at your failings or do you expect others to be a certain way. ...

COVERED IN DIRT AND FILTH & A SINNER

To have Palsy in scripture meant someone who was covered in dirt and their own filth and could not walk, a complete invalid, a mess and because the religious thought it was their sin or the sin of a parent they were unforgiven and unredeemable (Exodus 15:26 & Deuteronomy 28:60, 61). Let us look at that briefly and be clear:

If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that healeth thee

(Exodus 15:26).

And

"He will bring upon thee all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee. Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed"

(Deuteronomy 28:60, 61).

The Disciples even came out with this for such was the mentality: theirs was the belief that sickness was caused by either the sin of the sick person, or of his parents, and that it was sent as punishment for that sin. Of the blind man, the disciples asked JESUS,

"Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?"

(John 9:2).

Also, sickness was typically ascribed to demons. Consequently, they believed that the remedy was the casting out these devils. JESUS referred to this when the Pharisees accused him of being Beelzebub (The Prince Of Devils-Satan Himself):

"And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?"

(Matthew 12:27)

So now imagine this if you will. Mark 2:3-12:

And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

HEALING & FORGIVENESS

For 'Healing and Forgiveness' to be successful they really have to walk hand in hand. 'By His Stripes We are healed' and by those same stripes and the nails that followed we are forgiven. The problem with most Christians, and I include myself sometimes in this, is that we really do not grasp how much God forgives us. We are called to forgive all and I know that can be hard.

Corrie Ten Boom (If you do not know who she is look her up on the Internet). She Stated that this happened in a Church in Munich just after the Second World War in 1947. It was there that a heavy set man approached Corrie just after she had preached on forgiveness. He asked for forgiveness. This man had been one of her guards when she was in the Concentration Camp. The man comes forward and this is the response as she remembered all the Nazi guards did at the camp at Ravensbrook and how she was called to forgive:

.. "And still I stood there with the coldness clutching my heart. But forgiveness is not an emotion—I knew that too. Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function regardless of the temperature of the heart. '... Help!' I prayed silently. 'I can lift my hand. I can do that much. You supply the feeling.' "And so woodenly, mechanically, I thrust my hand into the one stretched out to me. And as I did, an incredible thing took place. The current started in my shoulder, raced down my arm, sprang into our joined hands. And then this healing warmth seemed to flood my whole being, bringing tears to my eyes.

(From "I'm Still Learning to Forgive" by Corrie ten Boom. From Guideposts Magazine. Copyright © 1972)

For if we take the step of faith doing our part God will do His. Oh wait He did already.

A CHOICE TOWARDS GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Andrew Farley says it well:

'A life-changing choice: "I forgive you and release you from anything you owe me, even if you do it again." '

That is about our stance with other people but there is also a stance towards others in their doctrines.

God is not like us who live in this physical sphere. He is transcendent. He is "other than." He is 'Above and Beyond' There is nothing that has been created that we can compare Him fully to. So God has given us ways within the perfect. He is Father, Friend, Family Kin (Brother) and even Finance. So this can make understanding, at times, especially when it comes to grasping the depth of his complete forgiveness for all our sins, past present and future (yes even those we have not committed yet) difficult to grasp:

Paul said that we have to renew our minds in Romans 12:2. So what can we know of God's Love:

- **God is A Father**
- **God is a Brother**
- **God is an intimate friend**
- **God's Love is Eternal**
- **God's Love is Perfect (Not having any form of sin or guile or untruth in it)**
- **God's Love is never fails**
- **God created everything that exists—the heavens and the earth—out of love.**
- **God sent Jesus to die for us out of Love.**
- **God's Love for us is the same Love He had for Jesus and that Jesus had for us**
- **The Holy Spirit is the expression of God's Love.**
- **God is Love**

When we imagine His kind of forgiveness, it shows us God's Loving-kindness, His Mercy, and Munificence (Big, Big Benevolence) . When God says that He forgives us ALL, Everyone there are no exceptions.

TESTIMONY

In the mid 90's I had a serious mental breakdown that resulted in a diagnosis of clinical depression. This is the sort of depression that numbs emotions (however it also makes you more vulnerable to negative thinking and other bad factors. At times you get really angry then you just close down and on it goes. You spend most your time living in your head alone. No ups or downs. If not careful some neurosis can manifest but not psychosis.

However many night alone in my bedsit I would ponder God's word. I will not speak about where I was dragged to by my own choice and the hell and torment I suffered. Enough to say each night alone in that small dingy room I would look for the Love of God and many a night I would receive a form of peace and calmness and a small sense of wellbeing as I read the truth of God's Love for me.

I did not get it then but I began a journey and I think it was here a seed was sown that later opened me up to the message of Grace I first heard through Vic, Nuncy. Because no matter how many times I felt dirty, angry, and afraid God would inform me of how he saw me and of course during the day I was living a different life. I was indeed a double minded man. But here is the rub God still spoke to me and showed me His Love and from there the search began. Because where God is and who He is he can do nothing but forgive in love.

GOD'S FORGIVENESS IS FOUND IN GOD'S LOVE

This is a foundational truth:

GOD'S FORGIVENESS IS FOUND IN GOD'S LOVE.

Over the last few weeks we have looked at both Love and compassion. My take on that is God's Love is eternal and God's compassion acts through the physical and appears at moments like in creation or salvation. But that is not what I now want to focus on.

We know that it is only a shadow that we will come to understand. When we get to express God's love and live it out and as we learn who He is we get to change and see the potential of what God can do not for us but for others too.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CALL TO FORGIVENESS

There is a piece of scripture that is often over looked or just plain misinterpreted. Its' placing is very important.

So what is it?

It is John 20: 19-23 (Translation mine):

"...Then on the same day early in the evening, being on a Sunday, when the doors were all locked shut; the disciples were assembled together because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities. However Jesus stood right in the middle of them, among them, and said to them:

'Peace and rest to you.'

And when he had said this, he showed them (His) hands and His side. Then the disciples were ecstatically happy to greet when they saw the Lord. Then again Jesus said to them:

'Peace and rest to you: as Father has sent me,

so I am sending you.'

And when he had said this, he breathed on, and said, to them:

' You! Receive the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins you remit and do not keep hold of and forgive, they are remitted (Let go of), not kept hold of and forgiven them; and whatsoever sins you retain, keep and hold onto and not let go of, they are retained and held onto.'

Let us look at these verses very carefully. This is Jesus' first appearance to His disciples after the resurrection. It is early evening, rather than early morning, and straight after the resurrection, because Jesus had been on the Road with some friends on a long walk, ending in communion, and gave them time to come back and tell what had happened (Luke 24:13-25).

The verses before this, in John, have Him resurrected and appearing to Mary. The verses after this tell us about Thomas' unbelief and doubt, and by what he said his lack of faith and unforgiveness:

'Unless I see... touch...' etc.

This comes out of a place of fear and anger and a stand against others who are thought to have been duped, hence: separating himself emotionally and psychologically, but you can see how much that fails. Thomas the living parable as an example. Thomas. His choice occurred but it was not through Faith.

So we have Faith and then Unbelief. We have Peace and We have Anger . We have Unity, Stillness and Fear and Unrest. We have Jesus not just promising The Holy Spirit (See Acts 2), we have Jesus speaking out a truth. We have Jesus gently moving them on passing on that breath as promise and commitment.

I am not going into 'The Lord's Prayer' as it is called (Though it is more likely John the Baptists Prayer), that was an old testament prayer as that sin of unforgiveness could actually ... Well I am not going there. This 'Lord's Prayer' was indeed an Old Covenant prayer. It is now a different system in place since the Cross and how we are to forgive others is based on God's forgiveness as an example but is now a Choice not a Law. No longer is it based on us forgiving but the forgiveness Jesus offered us from the Cross (Luke 23:34)

What, however, we have here in John 20:22-23, is Jesus telling the disciples (and us), about Forgiveness, not as an emotion but a choice. This is Jesus, saying in effect, I have done my part, you have to live it out. Note that this was the first act done to the Church (the group of disciples together-the later Church leaders).

Read the above passage again very carefully. This is not about the fact that God will hold onto the sins of folk we do not forgive; but we will. It is a choice. It is about Faith and about belief. If we know what Jesus did in His finished Work it is easy, yes easy, to forgive others 'If We Choose Too' and if we are centred on that Love Of Christ. It says very clearly in the passage: 'You', not, 'We. ' Notice that the emphasis is put on 'You' (us), not God.

There is more to this but it is simple as that. We can choose to forgive or not. That was the choice Jesus set before us. Forgiveness of others for ourselves in ourselves and our 'Rest and Peace'. It is not in God's box any longer but ours. God made His choice and He uttered those immortal words:

'Father Forgive them, for they have no idea what they are doing.'

(Luke 23:34)

For Jesus the choice to forgive sin and all wrongs (except rejection of Jesus and what He did- This is the 'Unforgivable Sin') , is a finished and a done deal. End of. That Forgiveness of God on the Cross was on so many levels; for us it is clear. You can hold onto the baggage and let unforgiveness weigh you down or you can let go. If you choose not to then accept the baggage. If you choose to forgive then as the song says: 'Let It Go!' You can choose forgiveness then rest and be at peace. Your choice, not God's. And definitely not retained in Heaven. Another tradition of men gone astray.

This does not mean that you cannot ask the Holy Spirit to Help you and make it a burdened lightened. I have many times. What The Spirit does is bring us to Jesus and then in knowing what He has done frees us up and that truth moves us on (John 8:32).

The forgiveness for, and of, the disciples was crucial at this point as we return to the passage in John. It had to be dealt with. The whys and wherefores lie elsewhere. Enough to say if they (The Disciples), had not forgiven The Jews and Romans that helped kill Him, and forgiven themselves, and God, or at least their concept of what God had done, then there would have been no Church. Forgiveness was indeed the issue that had to be overcome. This was not because it keeps God from us but on a psychological and emotional level it can keep us from God. Get the difference.

The reality is that this all centred on God's love (John 17:23-26; 1 John 4:18). The truth is that all our friends, neighbours family and heroes (all but Jesus) can let us down. We get hurt. This happens too as regards churches (small 'c') and fellowships. Here is where the enemy can really get at us. That is where our forgiveness and Love however come into play. We are usually hurt by those we Love. We also love ourselves too and often even our ego's get hurt when we think of being disrespected or believe others look down on us, and the rest of it. Thank God He forgives us and has forgiven us. As Peter says in 1 Peter 4:8:

However way above all things have fervent deep Godly Love among yourselves: for 'Agape Love' shall cover the multitude of sins and faults.

Love is the answer. Love is the way. You know that, even deep down you know that. The more you pray (worship and speak to God) and get into the scriptures and Get that Living Word you get that. The relationship strengthens and you just know and have more revealed.

So how much do we know that we are Forgiven. It is in this that we know then how much we are Loved.

You are a Child of God, God washed you white as snow! He did not leave behind even the smallest blemish. His forgiveness is total and complete. This also means His Forgiveness of others is complete too. One Act of Forgiveness trickling down all of time and space.

Do you understand this?

Do you believe this?

If you do, then you need to let go of any guilt that you may feel from past sins any baggage. Look to Jesus and see the amazing grace of his forgiveness...

FORGIVENESS FREES US TO LOVE

It boils down to this and you have to get this because when you do it will free you to love anyone anywhere. Listen take it in and reflect on this: See it in your mind. I will not rush this. God forgives You; He Forgives me:

2 Samuel 12:13

Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." And Nathan said to David, "The Lord also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.

You are forgiven! (Col 2:13)
You are healed! (1 Pe 2:24)
You are blessed! (Eph 1:3)
You are righteous! (2 Co 5:21)
You are holy! (Heb 10:10)
You are mighty! (Eph 1:19)
You are accepted! (Rm 15:7)
You are loved! (Rm 8:39)

SEEKING THOSE WE HAVE HURT

However and here is where I stick in my big but. We are to be so minded of others that we may be called to seek them out or beg pardon off them in humility.

It's continually imperative to seek the forgiveness of those we've hurt, even if it is hard to do. Jesus said that if "your brother or sister has something against you ... First go and be reconciled to them" (Matthew 5:23-24). After all we are called as we know in this fellowship to reconciliation. We may have to humble ourselves and beg pardon.

They may not forgive you, of course; they may refuse your approach or react with anger over what you did, but then it becomes their problem, not yours. You will have done everything you could to let them know you regret what happened, and that you want their forgiveness. If it is impossible to do because that person is not around anymore, then I suggest you write a letter put it in an envelope, reflect on it and then burn it, it is done. That's what's important to God. The Bible tells us to "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone" (Colossians 3:13).

Why is it imperative to seek the forgiveness of those we've perceived as damaged? For one thing, it could bring about reconciliation. It is not about whose fault it is and it is not important who was right, you alone are the one kicking yourself or the one prompted by God so move on it. Responsible. But that hurt will only be healed through forgiveness if you seek to heal it (and if the other person responds). But in that you are then healed of any burden. Let it go. LET IT GO...

But now that you've given your life to Christ, you have another important reason to seek the forgiveness of those you've hurt. It's this: You now have an opportunity to tell them how God has forgiven you — and how He can forgive them also. No matter how much you've wronged others, it's small compared with the wrongs we've committed against God. And yet He still loves us, and Christ stands ready to forgive us. I want to quote from a very good friend who is a Pastor and state what he said on FB yesterday.

'Don't let past failures and mistakes continually haunt you, even though your life, like mine, is scarred and blighted with mistakes and wrong choices. Simply refuse to rummage through your dung heap of failures or let anyone cast them up time and time again. By all means admit them, correct them and apologise if

necessary, but it's now time to press on. It's time to let God's grace cover all things in our lives. All shameful dark secrets, all hurts, all hours of turmoil and days of constant worry and anxiety need to be left at the foot of the cross. God never promises to remove us from our struggles. However, He does promise to change the way we view and deal with them...'

God forgives You; He Forgives me:

Psalm 32:5

**I acknowledged my sin to You,
And my iniquity I did not hide;
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord";
And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.**

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Psalm 85:2

**You forgave the iniquity of Your people;
You covered all their sin. Selah.**

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Psalm 78:38

**But He, being compassionate, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them;
And often He restrained His anger
And did not arouse all His wrath.**

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Numbers 14:20

So the Lord said, "I have pardoned, forgiven them according to your word;

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Psalm 103:12

As far as the east is from the west,

So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Now start whispering it out slowly:

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME (do not rush it reflect)

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Job 14:17

“My transgression is sealed up in a bag,

And You wrap up my iniquity.

Whisper... GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Isaiah 44:22

“I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud

And your sins like a heavy mist.

Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”

Whisper:

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Isaiah 38:17

**“Lo, for my own welfare I had great bitterness;
It is You who has kept my soul from the pit of nothingness,
For You have cast all my sins behind Your back.**

Whisper:

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Now speak it out say it believe it

GOD- FORGIVES- YOU & GOD- FORGIVES- ME

2 Corinthians 5:19

namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Believe it. Speak it out:

**If you want to speak in tongues but say in your heart: GOD- FORGIVES- YOU &
GOD- FORGIVES- ME**

Matthew 9:2

And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, “Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven.”

GOD- FORGIVES- YOU & GOD- FORGIVES- ME

Mark 2:5

And Jesus seeing their faith *said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”

Speak it out (Yes even you out there):

GOD- FORGIVES- YOU & GOD- FORGIVES- ME

Luke 5:20

Seeing their faith, He said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you."

GOD- FORGIVES- YOU & GOD- FORGIVES- ME

Luke 7:48

Then He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven."

GOD- FORGIVES- YOU & GOD- FORGIVES- ME

Luke 7:47

For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little."

Believe it, Say It. Shout it out if you like:

GOD- FORGIVES- YOU & GOD- FORGIVES- ME

1 John 2:12

I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake.

Past tense. GOD- FORGIVES- YOU & GOD- FORGIVES- ME

Colossians 2:13

When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

GOD- FORGIVES- YOU & GOD- FORGIVES- ME

GOD- FORGIVES- YOU & GOD- FORGIVES- ME

Romans 3:25

whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed.

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Colossians 3:13

bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Matthew 9:5

Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up, and walk’?

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Mark 2:9

Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven’; or to say, ‘Get up, and pick up your pallet and walk’?

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME

Luke 5:23

Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins have been forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’?

GOD HEALS & FORGIVES EVERYONE

I know God heals all but in our hearts now we should know. We saw it at the start of the Message/Sermon: This is Jesus speaking to you particularly if you are not a believer or you believe that you are. So taking from Mark chapter 2 as I did at the start at the book. If you believe God heals all you have to also know He has Forgiven all:

But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

When we acknowledge our physical healing remember that in that we have also been forgiven.

GOD FORGIVES YOU & GOD FORGIVES ME & God Forgave everyone in the World.

And now look around the room if you can:

GOD FORGIVES YOU

GOD FORGIVES ME

GOD FORGIVES US ALL

AMEN!