

Types of Forgiveness

Scripture Text: Colossians 3:12-15

About the Text:

- 1) Paul, in writing to the church at Colossae, speaks concerning the character a Christian should have.
- 2) This character involves an understanding of our relationship with God—God’s holy elect.
- 3) This character involves an understanding of the type of heart we are to have—compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering.
- 4) This character involves an understanding of the type of attitude we are to have toward one another’s faults—forgiving.
- 5) Just as Christ forgave us, so also should we forgive our brethren.

The subject of Christian forgiveness.

- 1) There is much misunderstanding regarding this subject.
- 2) Some say one should always forgive regardless of the attitude of the offender.
- 3) Some say that one should only forgive if asked for forgiveness.
- 4) What do we do about forgiving people who are not Christians?
- 5) What is God’s role in forgiveness.
- 6) We are going to try to answer some of these questions this morning.

There are three manifestations of Christian forgiveness within the scriptures.

I. FORGIVENESS OF SINS

1. Granted only by God’s authority.

- 1) Remember the man sick of the Palsy in Mark 2.
- 2) We read, (Mark 2:6-11).
- 3) They were right that only God had the authority to forgive sins; they were wrong in thinking that Jesus was not God!
- 4) This authority is now in Christ. Matthew 20:18

2. Is accomplished through the blood of Christ.

- 1) Ephesians 1:7
- 2) Matthew 26:28

3. Separates non-Christian from Christian.

1) Acts 2:38

2) 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

4. Is ongoing for Christians as they walk in the light. 1 John 1:7

5. Is conditional upon repentance and confession.

1) 1 John 1:9

2) Example of Simon Acts 8:22

6. Conditional upon us forgiving others of their trespasses.

1) Matthew 6:14-15

2) Notice Jesus comments in Luke 17:3-4

3) In Matthew 18:21-22

II. FORGIVENESS AS AN ATTITUDE.

1. The example of Jesus — Luke 23:34 “Father forgive them”

2. The example of Stephen — Acts 7:60 “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.”

3. God’s attitude—2 Peter 3:9 “not willing that any should perish” We are children of God!

4. Not talking about forgiveness of sins, but an attitude of forgiveness.

1) Not holding something against another.

2) Acting in such a way so as to purge one’s self of negative/sinful thoughts regarding the other.

3) Practicing love toward all men. Jesus said, “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” (Matt. 22:39) How can we do this if we hold something against them?

4) Emptying one’s heart of vengeful thoughts. Note the words of Paul in Rom. 12:19-21

III. FORGIVENESS IN MATTERS OF OPINION.

1. Sometimes we offend one another in mere matters of opinion.

1) Someone cuts you off in traffic.

2) Perhaps you have an accident.

2. We must stand ready to forgive in these matters.

3. Poor example of the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 6:1-8

1. When thinking about Christian forgiveness let us remember . . .

- 1) Forgiveness of Sins
- 2) Forgiveness as an attitude
- 3) Forgiveness in matters of opinion.

2. It is so important to forgive.

- 1) In the day of judgment do we want to stand before God with anything less than forgiveness on our hearts?
- 2) In the day of judgment do we want to meet God holding a grudge against someone?
- 3) What if that person (not a Christian) later in life becomes one?
- 4) Will we stand before God with an unforgiving heart toward them?

3. Invitation

- 1) If you are a Christian but have fallen away
 - a. God wants you to ask for forgiveness today.
 - b. He has promised to forgive you if you confess to Him (1 John 1:9)
- 2) If you are not a Christian this morning . . .
 - a. God wants you to come to him for forgiveness today.
 - b. Heed the plan that it has for man's salvation today!

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