

PALM SUNDAY

EXPERIENCING THE FREEDOM OF FORGIVENESS

SELECTED SCRIPTURES

DR. ROBERT JEFFRESS

March 25, 2018

Introduction: The two most important issues in life both deal with the subject of forgiveness: choosing to receive forgiveness from God and choosing to extend forgiveness to those who wrong us. The choice to forgive others is essential to our physical, emotional, and spiritual health and is a mark of a true disciple of Christ.

I. **Why Forgiveness Matters**

A. **Physical Benefits of Forgiveness**

B. **Emotional Benefits of Forgiveness**

C. **Spiritual Benefits of Forgiveness**

Matthew 6:14-15 ¹⁴ “For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.”

Matthew 18:27 “The lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt.”

Matthew 18:32-34 ³² “Then summoning him, his lord said to him, ‘You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him.”

Matthew 18:35 “So shall My heavenly Father also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart.”

II. **Misunderstandings About Forgiveness**

A. Forgiveness Is Not Ignoring or Rationalizing Offenses

Genesis 50:20-21 ²⁰ [Joseph said] “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive. ²¹ So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones. So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.”

B. Forgiveness Is Not Surrendering Our Desire for Justice

Romans 12:19 “Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY,’ says the Lord.”

Psalms 82:3 “Vindicate the weak and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and destitute.”

Isaiah 1:17 “Learn to do good; seek justice, reprove the ruthless; defend the orphan; plead for the widow.”

C. Forgiveness Is Not Forgetting Offenses

Jeremiah 31:34b “...for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

Romans 4:7-8 ⁷ “BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED. ⁸ BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT.”

Colossians 2:13b-14 ¹³ “... having forgiven us all our transgressions, ¹⁴ having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us; which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

D. Forgiveness Is Not Reconciling with Our Offender

Romans 12:18 “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.”

Reconciliation Requires

1. Repentance

2 Corinthians 7:10 “For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death.”

2. Rehabilitation

3. Restitution

III. Understanding Authentic Forgiveness

Matthew 18:27 “And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt.”

- A. Genuine Forgiveness **Acknowledges** the Offense
- B. Genuine Forgiveness **Calculates** the Debt
- C. Genuine Forgiveness **Releases** the Debtor to God

Mark 11:25 “Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.”