

Forgiveness looks great in the rear view mirror.

Friday, September 27, 2013

What a week this has been. I tell you the truth, not one of these days have been just words in my life, but they have been hard learned lessons. Some were learned through wins and many were learned through losses. There is nothing that will humble you more than taking account of all that you have needed to be forgiven of.

Looking back on this week, which act of forgiveness is harder for you? Circle the appropriate response

1. Forgiving others
2. Forgiving myself
3. Asking for forgiveness
4. Letting go of the desire to punish
5. Remembering to stay with forgiveness and not pick the offense up again

The truth is that forgiveness is a life long practice. There will be some stories of forgiveness behind us, but there will always be opportunity and need for forgiveness given and forgiveness received before us as well.

Romans 8:27 *"And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."*

Continue to ask God to search your heart and allow the Holy Spirit to intercede for you to align you with the will of God. It would be wrong if I did not put on paper the place of accountability in our lives when it comes to forgiveness. When God prompts us to ask for forgiveness or offer up forgiveness, we are accountable when we throw off the prompting of God by refusing to obey. When we refuse to listen to the voice of God our spirit will begin a process of desensitizing our ability to hear the voice of God. Turning our back in disobedience, our hearts lose the ability to recognize His voice and prompting.

Friends, this is a place you don't want to live in. Stay attached to the vine by walking in prompt obedience. My experience is this, you never regret obedience, but you sure pay the relationship price in delay and disobedience. What have you got to lose when you obey except your pride? Lay it down and trust God with it. Surely if He is prompting you, He will prepare you!

One last thing on this topic: Have you ever tried to be reconciled with someone and it has failed? There are those times when we walk in obedience and the other party to the offense is just not there yet, not ready to reconcile or let it go. What do you do at those times? You chose to forgive anyway, and leave it at the foot of the cross. Or you continue to ask God to forgive you and leave it at the foot of the cross as well, whichever role you played in the conflict.

Do you have any places right now that you are carrying with you? Places where God has clearly spoken to you to forgive or ask for forgiveness, you have prayerfully walked out obedience, but the other party wasn't ready to close the book on the offense yet? Let's put it on paper and offer it up sacrificially before the Lord:

"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" (Isaiah 44:22 NASB). As we return to God with these places of unresolved forgiveness we have to trust that He holds it all and He will hold you in the journey of forgiveness. Write a prayer of trust to God in these situations, and ask Him to complete the work of grace, forgiveness and reconciliation in your spirit, regardless of whether the other party is willing to forgive or not.

This wraps up our week focusing on Forgiveness. My prayer for you, and for me; is that we won't just see forgiveness as a completed work in our relationships with others, but a mindset and spiritual practice that we are committed to every day. Thanking God for our time together this week digging deeper in the word!