

Forgive, Trust and Forget

Introduction

Exo 14:30 Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.

Exo 13:18 But God led the people about, *through* the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt.

Israel reached a cross road in their experience. A number of years ago, in st. Phillip, Barbados there is a four cross going towards a bus depot. For years at this four cross, people lost their lives because those coming from the minor roads would not stop, despite the fact that stop signs were erected. Government then decided to put two large road humps on both minor roads approaching the junction. Eventually they made the junction a four way stop. They did this because a woman was driving behind a vehicle approaching the junction with her car cams on. The car in front of her went over both road humps and rather than stopping, proceeded to go across the junction. At that said moment a large SUV, going about 100K was also crossing the junction on the main road and plowed into the car as it was crossing from the minor road. It was tragic! The person lost their life. Remember this, "The Devil is at the cross Roads."

Rather than making the right decision to stop, the person listen to the devil and proceeded without stopping. We reach a cross road each time we need to make a decision in life, whether that decision is big or small. We need to remember that at each cross road in life, as we approach it, the devil is already there for a purpose. When you are driving on the street and the speed limit is 50MPH, you are at a cross road. When you are at work and a person of the opposite sex makes a pass at you, you are at the cross roads. When you are at home and your spouse or family member is taunting you, interfering with your things, being down right nasty with their words or actions, you are at a cross road.

Above all this, some person has done you something that is wrong and it is really unforgivable in your estimation. The person does not come to say sorry but carries on as if nothing has taken place. You are again at a cross road. What will your decision be? What will your attitude be? How will you react to that person? Remember, the devil is at the cross road. What do you think the devil will be telling you? However, remember God says that He will never leave you. Therefore, God is also at the cross road. What do you think God will be telling you? Let us see.

Today we are going to be looking at three dimensions of the ministry of reconciliation.

1. We are going to look at what forgiveness is in God's estimation.
2. We are going to look at trusting God and cooperating with Him to bring restoration after you have forgiven.
3. We are going to look at what it means to forget when a person has done you the worst thing and each time you see them that thing presents itself to your mind.

The Ministry of Reconciliation

Adam was in Eden, in paradise. He rebelled against his maker and had to leave the garden of Eden. God was in the Garden where the blessings were and Adam was out in the earth where the curse was. What will God do? God left the safety of the garden and entered the curse where Adam was in order to reconcile man to Himself. This is the process of the ministry of reconciliation.

Sacrifice, Death, Self-Denial, Self-abnegation, Self forgetfulness, all these are involved in the ministry of reconciliation. Consider Christ Himself setting the example in the ministry of reconciliation.

Php 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Php 2:6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

Php 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

Php 2:8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

And, by the way, the Carnal Heart cannot manufacture those attributes, they are divine. They cannot be attained unto, but by faith, God gives them to us as free gifts.

This is the principle. The one who is spiritual is the who takes the initiative within the process of reconciliation. This takes death!

Gal 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Gal 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Remember, the devil is at the cross roads. It is there at the cross roads that you will need to bear your cross and follow Jesus. The old man cannot get this done. The New Man must arise from the ashes of the Old Man in order for this work to be accomplished. Paul says,

2Co 5:17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

2Co 5:18 And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

2Co 5:19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

2Co 5:20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

If a person is drowning in the sea, and they are nearly lifeless, you don't throw them a rope, you jump in and help.

If a person is in a pit and their arms are broken, you don't let down a ladder and tell them to climb up, you go down and help them get out of the pit.

Empathy is the basis of the ministry of Reconciliation.

When a person does you something that is wrong, recognize that they could only have done it by being separated from God. They are in the problem not you, unless you allow what they did to separate you from God. Seek God for ideas for their restoration to Him in order that resolution can come between you two.

How and When Do We Forgive in the context of the Ministry of Reconciliation.

Joseph was living wonderfully in his father's house and was treated with favor. His Brothers were jealous and treated him in the worst possible manner that any family member can treat another. His brothers threw him into a pit and afterward sold him as a slave to Ismaelite traders who were going into Egypt. Yet, he held no bitterness. He knew God was on his side.

Joseph was sold to Potifar and eventually was treated with favor in his master's house. Through unfortunate circumstances, Joseph was cast into prison because of lies that were told on him. Yet he held no bitterness. He knew God was on his side.

While in prison Joseph became favored again and was given certain tasks to do. He assisted Pharaoh's butler and was asked to be remembered. Years passed and Joseph was forgotten. Yet He held no bitterness. He knew God was on his side.

Eventually, circumstance arose that cause Joseph to sit as second command in Egypt. He had opportunity to victimize the butler, Potifer and his brothers. He did not do this because he never became bitter for He knew that God was on his side, and that all things were working out for good. See how he treated his brothers after his father died.

Gen 50:18 And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we *be* thy servants.

Gen 50:19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for *am* I in the place of God?

Gen 50:20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive.

Gen 50:21 Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.

Within the context of the ministry of reconciliation, this is God's idea of forgiveness.

God's Idea of Forgiveness

This is the true nature of Forgiveness. It does not wait until a person is repentant.

Mrk 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

Mrk 11:25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

Mrk 11:26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

What does God's idea of forgiveness look like? Peter asked a question regarding forgiveness.

Mat 18:21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

Mat 18:22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

During the night of betrayal, Peter did Him the worst thing. How did He relate to Peter? He sought to restore him to his former place.

Jhn 21:17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

Three times Peter denied his Lord. Three times His Lord embraced him back into the work. We cannot out sin God! God is in the business of restoration, rehabilitation and reconciliation.

Trusting God During Trauma. What does this mean in real terms?

The Dire Need to Trust God when Death to Self is the Only Option to Please Him and save your brother or sister.

Stephen's Attitude before the Sanhedrin Council

Act 7:59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

Act 7:60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Paul's Attitude of Those who were seeking his life

Rom 9:1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

Rom 9:2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

Rom 9:3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

Jesus' Attitude to His persecutors

Luk 23:33 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

Luk 23:34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

Forgetting Does not Mean Amnesia

To forget means to choose not to remember. That is, you will not reckon a person's false against them. It is not only healing to the relationship but to your mind and body.

Isa 38:17 Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul *delivered it* from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

Ezk 33:15 *If* the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.

Ezk 33:16 None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

Ezk 33:17 Yet the children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but as for them, their way is not equal.

Php 3:13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

Php 3:14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Php 3:15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

CONCLUSION

1. We looked at what forgiveness is in God's estimation. Forgiveness is not passive but very active in seeking restoration of the relationship.
2. We looked at trusting God and cooperating with Him to bring restoration after you have forgiven. This takes death to self.
3. We looked at what it means to forget when a person has done you the worst thing and each time you see them that thing presents itself to your mind. This means that we must not reckon a person's past against them but embrace them as Christ has embraced us.