

# As We Forgive Our Debtors

When we realize how much we're forgiven, we freely give grace to others.

Aug 28, 2022 | Part 4 of the series TEACH US TO PRAY | Jordan Biel

## MT 6:9-12

**“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. <sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.<sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread,<sup>12</sup> and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. <sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. ESV**

Jesus is teaching us how to pray - what to say - the framework that we should have in approaching prayer. I want to put up a slide I used the last two weeks to define who is God, who is man and who is satan. The reason for that is that it gives us an understand we NEED if we are going to live out this pray of bringing God's kingdom to earth. We can't bring something we don't understand. We need to know who is God, what is His Kingdom like and why is the world we live in so messed up at times? Lastly, what are we to do about it.

Who is God?

Artist | King | Father

Who is Satan?

Poser | Intruder

Who is Man?

Image of God (Art) | Governor/Steward | Child/Heir

When you understand this, you will realize that is is Satan who wants you to be offended and angry.

I'm basing those identities on many scriptures of course but primary this one from John. Jesus is speaking here.

## JN 10:7-10

**<sup>7</sup> So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not**

**listen to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.**

In week 1 we said that the abundant life - the life of living Kingdom reality - heaven reality here on earth can mean freedom from physical pain!

Today, I want to suggest to you that the abundant life means a life free from offense. It's a life that gives grace and doesn't hold a debt over someone. Know that is Satan, the enemy, that will be a little voice in your mind reminding you of an offense, playing it over and over and even embellishing it to where you now see that person with a filter over your eyes. Now because of the offense, everything they do is offensive. We'll discuss that more later.

## **Forgiveness is 3 Things!**

- MT 6, LK 6

### **1. Forgiveness is a sign of God's grace at work**

It's a sign that God's love has filled our hearts. When it does, it "covers a multitude of sins" not just in my own life but now expressed towards others

*Being mistreated does not give you permission to hold on to an offense. Two wrongs do not make a right.*

**When we realize how much we're forgiven, we freely give grace to others.**

Verses to Consider

Gal 6 talk about sowing in the Spirit. I encourage you to read that this week for further study. One of my takeaways from Galatians 6 is this: **Whenever I give love and grace to someone, I am "sowing to the Spirit" and that means that not only is that person blessed (bc they're taken "off the hook" but I am blessed** according to scripture, I will eventually reap a harvest of love. If I sow grace, I reap grace!

### **1 Cor 13 | Love keeps no record of wrongs**

Note\* If you feel this may be an ongoing battle for you - you hold grudges and often replay the movie of people offending you - then I strongly encourage you to buy this

book on Amazon and read it “Bait of Satan” by John Bevere. There's a reason it has sold over 10 million copies. It's powerful.

Don't let Satan get a foothold in your heart. When Satan gets a foothold, he will work from there to develop a stronghold. And how does it begin? An offense. Something that offended you - made you mad or upset.

In the words of John Bevere...

*Satan hopes that we will take his bait of offense so that he will have a foothold in our lives.*

## Root of bitterness

Hebrews

See to it that a root of bitterness doesn't grow up in your heart ...

“Any thought that doesn't give hope is rooted in a lie” Kris Vallaton

You can forgive anyone - even those who have a “power dynamic” w you such as a boss or leader - someone in authority.

1 Sam 24:1–22 tells us that twice David's men tried to convince David to kill King Saul. It was definitely tempting, because Saul was trying to kill him! I mean we would call this “self-defense,” right!?! But, in every case, David knew that it was up to God's timing to elevate him to authority, not him.

David actually had a few chances to kill Saul, the man who was trying kill him! Saul camped out in the desert of Zips on the hill of Hakilah. King Saul was lying asleep next to his commanding officer Abner with the army camped around them.

Abner and the guards were NOT doing their job in keeping the King safe, and they fell asleep. David and Abishai, one of his mighty men, snuck down into the camp unnoticed. Abishai whispered to David, “Let's kill King Saul now! God is giving you this chance!” But David said, “No,” and simply took Saul's sword and water jug as proof that he could've killed the King. The next morning, David shouted across the valley to King Saul, telling him that he had the chance to kill him, but he let him live. David had committed in his heart: “I would not lay hand on the Lord's anointed.” 1 Samuel 26:23b

David also had a chance to kill Saul when he walked into the very cave to go to the bathroom where David and his men were hiding out. David had the chance to kill him, yet he chose only to

cut off a small piece of his garment. These are character tests. David chose not to assume his place of ministry before his appointed time.

David had a good understanding of honor and the power of words, and he knew that if God had made Saul a king, then it wasn't his job to kill him—with a sword or with words that cut just as deep.

David ignored the voice of even friends who would tempt him to harm the king. They even used Christian jargon saying, "God is giving you this chance to kill him!" But David paid attention to the Holy Spirit's voice that told him to honor King Saul, simply because he was king, even though King Saul was trying to kill him! David let God be his defender. David was careful to honor the authority that God placed above him. And it should be no different for you and me.

## 2. Forgiveness sets me free, not just the person

I'm sure if you're like me, you've experienced this truth in your own life. We somehow believe that when we hold a debt against someone, unwilling to forgive them, that is them who is suffering when in reality it is us.

Until we forgive the person who offended us, it is us who is suffering. When I don't forgive, it is me who is distracted and living with a mind filled with frustration and chaos and anger. That overflows to everyone around me. Whether we realize it or not, when we refuse to forgive someone, that anger and resentment can only be masked for so long. At some point the mask will come off.

At some point the pain within your heart will show itself. And it can show itself in a variety of ways.

### *Stewing*

You can be 'stewing' over something, mad at the way someone treated you, playing the movie of their offensive words over and over again. What you don't realize is this: that is greatly affecting you and your family in a negative way.

### 3 Side Effects of Stewing instead of Forgiving

**\*You will be short-tempered** with your spouse and kids Until you deal with that issue in your heart, you will snap at your kids and wonder "why" I'll tell you why - there's unresolved conflict in your heart.

**\*You will miss the opportunity** to pray for unbelievers around you who are hurting. You don't even see them when you are hurting. Because hurt, puts blinders on you causing you to ONLY SEE what affects you - how YOU are feeling - whether YOU are happy or not.

**\*You will miss the joy you're meant to walk in**

**God designed you to walk in joy because of the person of Jesus Christ.**

Because of the Gospel, you're forgiven and given the power to forgive! That freedom will fill your heart when you receive it as truth. Some though, would rather be right than reconciled, separated (and prideful) rather than united (and humble)

Something you've heard me say often here is **Unity requires humility.**

Sadly, many Christians are unwilling to say three little words "I was wrong."  
"I was wrong" and "Will you forgive me?"  
You see, when we have broken relationships,

Forgiveness enables God to continue using you. **Unforgiveness is like a road block. It stops you from moving ON with what God has for you next. It ties you to the past when God is trying to liberate you for the future.**

### **Gen 50:19-20**

Tell Joseph's Story

Summarize:

He forgave his brothers, showing them great grace. EVEN though his emotions told him not to. He was again, a picture (type) of Jesus in doing so. Once he did this, he was able to move on in being the Prime Minister of Egypt and continue being used of God.

*Many people are unable to function properly in God's purpose and calling for their lives because of wounds, hurts, and offenses in their lives. - John Bevere*

Unforgiveness stops unbelievers from getting a revelation of Jesus!  
John 14-17 tells us that when believers are united in their faith in Christ (reconciled and living in harmony) then the world sees JESUS by seeing THEM united.

So what's opposite of this? Unbelievers do NOT see Jesus when we refuse to show grace to our brother or sister - when we hold a grudge - when we gossip and slander people.

I wonder how many Christians will face the Great White Throne of Judgement (yes we all face it) and will be very surprised when all their actions both good and bad are played front of their eyes. Scripture says this will happen. Yes Jesus is our advocate and He'll step in and say but I have forgiven them of all these things" but friend, I don't want that list of sins to be long! Do you? I don't want that scene to be a long scene of sinful actions. And I just wonder how many Christians will be surprised when every time they gossiped and called it "prayer" and how it grieved the Holy Spirit - those scenes and memories just play out one right after another.

"Can you believe they're getting a divorce. I knew they would. She was always not dressing appropriately."

"Did you hear? Jan and David are..."

I have to tell you what he said to me. It made me so mad..."

When the OPPOSITE should be happening - the minute a negative is brought forward in conversation, your reaction should be blessing, blessing and prayer! You should say "Oh, Let's pray right now

You know it's hard to stay mad at someone you're praying for.

Why do you think Jesus tells us to pray for our enemies? Because

**You will begin to love anyone you pray for, because in prayer, you're getting the heart of God; God loves them. Once you pray for your enemy (anyone who has offended you) you will begin to love them more and more... despite their flaws and bad habits.**

So many Christians let unforgiveness zap much of their energy and resources. Many people expend so much energy on simply trying to make it through another day that they are unable to live a truly abundant life. They miss out on much of what God has for them, and there is little left over to give away to others.

When we ask people to have faith for things like missions, giving offerings or receiving miracles, many say, "I can hardly see my way clear to reach tomorrow, let alone think about this other stuff." They are unable to really go for God with abandonment. The answer is often locked up in the whole issue of repentance and forgiveness.

We don't get ensnared so much with people we are not close to, such as the man down the street or the woman in the next town. People we don't have close relationships with don't usually hurt us or anger us deeply.

The ones who can unsettle us are those we are close to. Spouses. Authority figures. Those we get close to have the power to offend us and hurt us. Hey. Because we respect them and want them to respect us and see us in a positive light. Careless words from someone we loved hurts more.

**So what do we do with those careless offensive words?**

**Sadly we often let them live rent free in our minds. Scripture tells us to take them captive and make them obedient to Christ.**

When Jesus gives us the great commission in Matthew 22 verse 40 and tells us to love our neighbor as much as our self it is sometimes hard when they've just recently said something that offended us deeply.

One of the truest test of Christian maturity is whether you are willing to forgive someone and see the best in them and continue to be their brother and sister in Christ and your friend and move on. Sadly many Christians don't move on in their mind and forgive but they literally move on - to a new friend to a new church.

Negative things in our lives offenses that are lingering in our minds or absolutely block us from going out and love to serve others in front of fulfilling the great commission let alone living out the great commandment to love other people. Again our primary commandment from Jesus is to love the Lord God with all of our heart soul mind strength and to love our neighbor as her self and something that's consistently linked to love is the choice to forgive.

According to John 10:10 it is the desire of Jesus that you live with a heart free of offense - an abundant life is one that has freely received and freely gives. That is His heart.

The enemy, on the other hand, is always negative. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy" (John 10:10). **He is the accuser, the thief, the destroyer. His intent is to bring guilt, fear, hopelessness, sin and, ultimately, death. Mark pointed out that the accuser accuses, while the Comforter comforts.**

Many of us don't realize that God would speak to us in our thoughts. I thought that if we were diligent in prayer, then maybe once in a long while we might hear His voice in a spectacular way. The curtains would blow around, thunder would crash and we would say, "God spoke to me today."

I didn't realize that God speaks through ordinary thoughts. It had never occurred to me that there was and is a still, small voice behind me saying, "This is the way; walk in it" (Isaiah 30:21). And by the same token, we can also hear the devil's words being whispered in our ears.

### **The power of the tongue**

James chapter 3 reminds us that the tongue has great power for good or evil. Small things can have huge influence- as we know, a ship can be steered with a tiny rudder. Our out-of-control tongues can be like deadly poison when we say things that are to some degree irreparable. People have been deeply wounded by words spoken against them. I pray, "O God, O God, put a guard over my mouth. Put a guard over my thoughts. I don't want to wound and offend."

I don't want the Holy Spirit to have these kinds of issues with me. One of the most grievous things to the heart of God is all the criticism that goes on in the lives of Christians. Nothing stops revival like criticism! Mark Virkler reminds us that there is often some truth mixed in with the devil's messages. He says, "He is not so foolish as to expect you to accept outright lies. Instead he will mix truth with error in order to make it believable. May I suggest the following approximate equation: 85% truth + 15% error + destructive intent = satanic accusation." <sup>2</sup> What we listen to and what we say must not only be full of truth, but intended for good, not evil.

Jesus said, "The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life" (John 6:63). God is calling us into a place of victory where mercy triumphs over judgment. May our thoughts and conversations reflect that. Choosing to speak life

### **3. Forgiveness of others is required for me to be forgiven**

- MT 6, LK 6
- When your heart is filled with unforgiveness, then there is no room in it to receive God's forgiveness. We must let others "off the hook" and remove their "debt" to us if we want God to remove our debt -



according to what Jesus said in MT 6:14-15 Jesus' closing comments after 'the Lord's prayer' *14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

### **Woman caught in adultery**

One of the most remembered encounters with Jesus is the woman caught in adultery.

Imagine being that woman. You were just run out of the house. You're not fully dressed and everyone can see it. The religious leaders and pastors are surrounding you with rocks in hand, ready to give you the punishment you deserve.

Suddenly a man walks through the religious leaders but there's no rock in his hands.

There's no anger in his eyes. There's no threat in him whatsoever. There's only kindness.

It's such a stark contrast to the others that you're thinking "who is this?" "What does he want with me?"

With every step He takes you realize that this is the Healer everyone has been talking about. Some have been calling him the Messiah. If anyone should judge you, it is Him.

But no. He stepped in between your accusers and you.

He knelt down.

Drew in the sand and asked a simple question. You can barely see him through your tears. You barely think straight being you were afraid for your life.

**Jesus steps in between you and judgment** - between you and your accusers and he asks a simple question. But he doesn't ask you. He turns his loving gaze from you and he faces the crowd = those with hands held high with stones ready to kill and He asks THEM a question 'Who of you is without sin? Cast the first stone.'

One by one the stones begin to drop - starting with the oldest leaders.

The older ones know they've been forgiven of many, many things.

They can recall the times when they lost their cool, when they were filled with regret for the shameful thing they had done. In that moment, they realized that if they needed grace, then this woman needed grace.

"Grace is dangerous" some would say.

*Jordan don't preach grace too much! If you do, they'll feel a license to sin.*

No my friend. No you're sorely mistaken. You see when you fully understand grace - the fact that a holy God forgave you of every sinful thing you've ever done and then gave you riches and blessing of adoption - giving what you didn't deserve and not giving you what you did deserve - that's grace - that my friend will transform you into the most holy-loving, God-fearing person there is. But you won't cling to holiness in effort to prove

something - you'll cling to holiness because you're already clinging to Jesus and it is HE who is holy. When you get a revelation of GRACE, you get a revelation of JESUS. Jesus Himself IS grace.

This woman was shocked.

Jesus turned his face back towards her "Woman, where are your accusers?"

She didn't even need to respond. Her silence answered His rhetorical question. They're gone.

After a moment, Jesus adds "No go and sin no more." You see "Going and sinning no more is a result of experiencing grace - experiencing Jesus."

If you put that backwards and try to simply NOT SIN before experiencing JESUS, that's religion and that will nEVER WORK.

Paul said it like this in Galatians "Who has bewitched you to think that what was begun in grace could continue in works?"

GRACE is remarkable!

Do not judge or you too will be judged. For in the same way as you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Matthew 7:1-2

Do you believe those words? Jesus said it, I believe it and that settles it, right? Jesus is saying that if you demand justice and repayment for wrongs done to you, then you will be dealt with according to your own prescription. The way you treat people is the way you will be treated.

Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

Matthew 7:3-5

**It seems that we have X-ray vision to see the short-comings of others, yet we seem quite blind to our own.**

**Understanding this is a major key to freedom. Jesus is saying that you need to judge yourself first. When you want mercy for your own sins, then you tend to go much easier on others. Begin to bless and not curse. It will bring you tremendous release. We can expend much energy in keeping our anger, fear and hurt pushed down. We are often not even in touch with those things in ourselves. But as we live**

**in mercy and grace, releasing and forgiving others from these issues, we will find His yoke is easy and His burden is light (Matthew 11:30).**

### **Justice is good, but mercy is better**

When I understood this dynamic, I prayed,  
"Lord, I want to be the most forgiving, loving and understanding person on the face of the earth. I don't want to get what I deserve--not from You, not from Satan and not from life."

Here's the irony ... Justice is good, but mercy is better. Justice is the law of God. It means that if you hurt me, I can hurt you. If you wrong someone, then that wrong must be made right. Our sense of justice understands this. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life-it's all very, very fair.

If you want justice, then you will be dealt with by the same rules. The law of God is good and fair, but it is also the arena in which Satan makes an appearance. He is the master prosecutor, the master accuser.

James says

"Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful." James 2:12-13

Let mercy triumph over judgment. You have forgiven me all this great debt of mine. Now that You have given me the keys to the Kingdom, I am going to forgive everybody who owes me anything or has hurt me in any way.'

Remember Matthew 18:23-35, in which Jesus told the story about the king who loaned money to one of his servants. The man ran up a huge debt--the equivalent of millions of dollars.

One day the king called him in and demanded, "Pay back what you owe me." The man said, "I can't. Have mercy on me and give me time, and I will pay you back everything." But the king said, "No, I want it now. Sell

him. Sell his family. Liquidate everything he has. We will recover as much as we can."

So the man fell down and begged for forgiveness, saying, "Please have mercy upon me." Then the king said, "Okay, you'll never be able to pay the debt back anyway, so forget it. Just go on about your business. I release you from your debt." How relieved and thankful that man must have been.

However, Jesus describes how, soon after that, that same man went out and took another servant by the neck, saying,

"Pay me the fifty dollars you owe me!"

His fellow servant replied with the same plea: "Have mercy on me. Give me time, and I will pay all of it back to you." But the first man said, "No way!" and had him thrown into jail before the debt was paid.

The word got back to the king. He called the man in and said, "You wicked servant. I had compassion and mercy upon you for this huge debt that you owed me.

Could you not have had mercy upon your fellow servant?"

Even though I knew that story, I was tempted to rationalize that I didn't sin so badly compared to every body else. A dualism was going on in my heart-I wanted mercy for myself but justice in my dealings with others. "They hurt me, they said this, they did that. they owe me and I want it put right." But for myself I wanted grace and mercy.

We can't have it both ways. If I am going to say I want justice because someone hurt me, then I cannot ask for mercy for myself. That is what the wicked manager did.

But if I try to exact justice, I have fallen from the place of grace and mercy, back to what is "fair."

The truth is that people hurt people. Parents hurt their children. Children hurt their parents. Many people have been hurt by their pastors. Many pastors have been hurt by their people. This is happening all over the Body of Christ.

When we ask people about their parents, their sisters and brothers and their childhood experiences, we often find years of baggage and judgments that people, for the most part, are not in touch with. Then they wonder why there are recurring patterns of pain and rejection in their lives.

### **The place of mercy**

**Why not come to the place where we say, "Lord, I forgive everybody of everything"? We can then let go of our claims for justice and repayment. The injustices are laid at the cross, and the mercy and grace of Christ can then flow into our lives. Love then covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8).**

**The Kingdom of God is not about keeping religious rules and regulations; it is about righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17), which pleases God and even receives human approval (Romans 4:18).**

**That joy is something that you and I have as we live and remain in the place of mercy.**

**Remember, YOU are a city on a hill. You are a light! You won't shine that light of Jesus if you're living with an offense.**

**You're having trouble to forgive someone? You need a revelation of grace, a revelation of Jesus!**

## // Summary of Conclusion

- What do we want to see the outcome be?
- They will forgive those who have offended or hurt them and find freedom in God's grace
- Practical Application: They will either ...
  - A) write a letter outlining how they feel towards that person then burn it OR send it and aim for reconciliation
  - B) go to the person who has offended them/they feel was wrong and verbally acknowledge "I feel you wronged me when you \_\_\_\_\_ but I want you to know I forgive you and I will not hold that as some sort of "debt" or "you owe me" card and I want you to forgive me for my role in our broken relationship. I could have been more kind or understanding....\_\_\_\_\_"
  - C) make an internal commitment to forgive quickly and give grace
- Response (see above)

Study questions:

1. Explain the significance of the two trees in the Garden of Eden.
2. Why is mercy better than justice?
3. How does Satan take advantage of the law of sowing and reaping?
4. What does Matthew 18:23-35 tell us about our desire for mercy for ourselves but judgment for others? What does it say about God's order of things?
5. What happens when we lay down our claims for justice and repayment? Are you prepared to do this yourself?

// Discussion Questions