• • TRANSCRIPT

• November 22nd 2026 "Forgiving From Your Heart"

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Turn to Matthew, Matthew chapter 18. Matthew chapter 18. I want to thank those watching by internet, what a blessing it is.

Believe it or not, our ministry is reaching all over the country. Amen. I want to thank that lady from, I think it's Cape Cod that sent a well-wishing card to me.

What a blessing that was. So if you have your Bibles, Matthew chapter 18, and if you could please stand, if you're able to. Beginning in verse 21, the Bible says, then came Peter to him and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him, till seven times? And Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times, but until 70 times seven.

And if you all know your calculations, that's 490 times. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take an account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him 10,000 talents.

But for as much as he had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and his children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down and worshiped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the Lord of the servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you. We thank you that we can come into this meetinghouse.

We thank you for those who have come. I ask you now, Lord, that you would speak to each and every one of us, as this is so important in our lives, to forgive from the heart. And Father, we learned so much from the Lord Jesus, and all that he said.

And I ask you now, Lord, that all of us would take heed to his word. And Father, thank you. Use me as the instrument in your hand.

May it be your words that they hear, and not mine. And Lord, may you do a work only you can do with the word of God. In this, I pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Well, you can be seated at this time. And here we come to the teaching that Jesus began to speak about forgiveness.

And the word forgive means to send away, to release, to dismiss, or to let go. And I believe this

is probably one of the most important messages I could preach. Because this touches everybody.

This touches every single relationship that you would have. This touches churches. This touches companies.

This touches the nation. Amen. So many times we see how people do hold things in their heart towards others.

And I always say that if you hold something in your heart towards another, it's not the person who suffers, it's you. Amen. You put yourself in a prison of bitterness.

And here the Lord is teaching this. And when a judge dismisses a case, the accused person is released from the charges against him. The offense is no longer held to his account.

And isn't that what Jesus has done for you and I who have come to him for salvation? It is precisely what God offers every sinner through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, forgiveness of sins. Ephesians chapter one, verse seven says it this way, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. It's all about grace.

And I've taught you before that grace means God's riches at Christ's expense. Amen. Christ had to go and suffer on the cross so that God can show each and every one of us his riches and glory in forgiveness.

Amen. So as we look at this, we see again that Calvary, Christ paid the debt that we could never pay. Our sin debt.

And I'm here to tell you as you get older, your sin debt gets bigger. Amen. And I also want to say as you get older, your heart gets more callous.

That's why it's so much for a child, so much for a young person to come to Christ when he still has that tender heart, when he still recognizes the fact that the Holy Spirit is moving on his heart, convicting him of his sin. But through Christ's sacrifice, our sins are removed. Our guilt is canceled and we are reconciled to God.

What a blessing. You know, as we think of Thanksgiving, man, you and I, we need to have a thankful heart, a grateful heart every day for what God has showed us. Psalm 103.12 says, for as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

Imagine that. Having received such grace from God, Jesus teaches that we must extend the same grace to others. And that's what he's teaching here.

The question is today, what does it mean to forgive others? Amen. Well, let's look at our passage

today and answer that question. What does it mean to forgive others? And here the Lord is teaching us.

So first of all, number one, forgiveness means forgiving repeatedly. Look again in Matthew chapter 8, Matthew chapter 8, verse 22. In here, Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times, but until 70 times seven.

Now, Peter thought forgiving seven times was generous. Amen. After seven times, you can cut somebody's head off.

No, I'm just joking. But this is what he's saying. Jesus shattered his calculations.

Jesus shocked Peter. The Lord was not establishing a limit either. He was just putting that out there.

490 offenses. He was teaching that forgiveness is not measured by a calculator, but by a transformed heart. Amen.

And I, so many times I feel, I see people living, families living, separated, divided by years of bitterness. This touches everyone. You look back at seeing how unforgiveness has ruined families, ruined friendships, ruined neighbors.

Remember the Hatfields and the McCoys? Amen. Ruined communities. And yes, it can even ruin churches.

Forgiveness means forgiving repeatedly. And it needs to have from a transformed heart. Forgiveness is not keeping score.

You know, love does not maintain a record book of offenses. That's not forgiveness. Turn with me to 1 Corinthians.

Look what it says in 1 Corinthians chapter 13. And if you're not quick with your Bible, you can just listen to me. Amen.

1 Corinthians chapter 13 verse 4 and 5 says this, charity suffereth long. Now that word charity is another word for love. And here it says, charity suffereth long and is kind.

Charity envieth not. Charity vaunteth not itself. It is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemingly.

Seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked. And here it is, and thinketh no evil. And when we see this, thinketh no evil is a phrase, literally that means love does not keep an account of wrong

sufferings.

And so many times people keep an account and bitterness and unforgiveness enters in. And when we truly forgive, we refuse to let past offenses become ammunition for future conflicts. And this happens so many times.

It happens between husband and wives. Past offenses will be used as ammunition for the next conflict. Whoa, you did.

Amen. Again, as I said, forgiveness means forgiving repeatedly. That's why Jesus said that.

70 times 7. As God does not continually remind us of forgiven sins, neither should we continually reminding others of forgiven failures. Amen. Also, the Lord teaches that forgiveness means willingly absorbing the cost of the offense.

Look again in Matthew chapter 18 verse 27. Matthew chapter 18 verse 27. We're still in this text.

Matthew chapter 18 verse 27. It says, then the Lord of that servant was moved with compassion and loosed him and forgave him his debt. You know, the king did not collect the debt.

What he did is he absorbed it. When the debt is forgiven, it does not disappear. The one old chooses to bear the loss himself.

You know, that's what happened when you and I, our sin had to be paid. And God, in his loving, gracious forgiveness and kindness towards us, what did he do? He went to the cross and he paid our debt with his own shed blood. Amen.

It's what the Bible teaches. You know, how many times, how many times I've heard people, you'd say, hey, when you die right now, where would you go? Well, I'll go to heaven. Well, why? Because I'm a good person.

It's not what the Bible teaches. It's because God came down and took a human body and walked as a man, perfect without sin. And then willingly for his love for you and I went and died on that cross and shed his blood for you and I. What an amazing story.

What a love letter. And that's exactly what Christ did for you and I. Hold your fingers in Matthew, but let's look at Colossians. Colossians chapter two, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Colossians chapter two.

And look what the scriptures say. Colossians chapter two, verse 13, speaking of the believer says in you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened

together with him, having forgiving you all trespasses. What does that mean? It means that you was dead in your sins and trespasses.

You had no spiritual life. But when you turn to Jesus and ask him, Lord, forgive me. He looked in your heart.

And what did he do? He quickened you. He gave you what we call is what the new birth being born again. And look it again.

I'll say it again. And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all your trespasses. Verse 14, blotting out the handwriting of offenses that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.

What an amazing thing. Jesus suffered injustice without retaliation. The Bible says what? He was as a sheep.

He opened not his mouth. He entrusted himself to the righteous judge. Amen.

Look what it says in 1st Peter. 1st Peter, 1st Peter chapter 2, verse 21, again, says, For even here unto where ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, who when he was reviled, he reviled not again. And when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself unto him that judgeth righteously.

Jesus suffered. The hands of all those Roman soldiers who beat him, crucified him, and he said not a word. But you know what he did say? Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do.

What an example for you and I. You know, it's choosing to suffer the loss rather than making another person suffer for what they have done. That's what forgiveness is. This does not mean excusing sin or denying wrongdoing.

That's not what it says. It means releasing the offender into God's hands and trusting his justice. That's very hard for you and I to do.

The world doesn't do that. The world says an eye for an eye. Jesus says forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do.

Also, in Romans chapter 12, Romans chapter 12, verse 19, the Bible says, Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath. For it is written, vengeance is mine. I will repay, saith the Lord.

You know how many times we want to take it in our own hands, what God says for just forgive them. And again, when you forgive somebody, you are releasing yourself out of this jail that you've made for yourself, the jail of bitterness and unforgiveness. And it's like a canker.

It'll eat you alive. Also, forgiveness means extending the grace God has extended to you. This is the key.

This is the key. This whole uh story that Jesus is giving, turn back to Matthew chapter 18 again, and look what he says continuing in this story. In Matthew chapter 18, verse 28, he says, But the same servant went out and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him a hundred pence, and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

And his fellow servant fell down at his feet and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Isn't that what the king did for him? But yet here he is. He demanded payment from someone whose debt was insignificant compared to his own.

Think of that. The forgiven servant forgot how much he had been forgiven. And sometimes you and I can forget.

Look again in Matthew chapter 18, verse 33. It says, Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? Someone went back and told the king, King, you should have seen the guy that you just forgave. Five million dollars.

He was all upset for somebody owing him five hundred dollars. He grabbed him by the neck. The king was kind of upset.

He said, All that compassion and forgiving. I dissolved five million dollars from him, and he's going to grab somebody by the neck for five hundred? That's what he's saying here. The reality is that every offense committed unto us is small compared to the immeasurable debt that we owe the Lord Jesus, that he paid with his own shed blood.

Think of that. I've said it before, that the older you get, that you're constantly sinning, whether it's in thought, mouth, or deed. Amen.

As we grow. Listen, there's none of us that are without sin. And if you've been forgiven for all you have done, God wants you and I to continually show grace to those who offend us.

Colossians chapter three, verse 12 and 13 says it this way. Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another. If any man have quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

Notice the standard here. It's not as others deserve it, not as you feel like it, not as the culture dictates, as Christ forgave you.

Amen. Listen, if we all could just take this to heart and really understand this, that God wants us to lay down our swords, lay down our backbiting, lay down our bitterness, and forgive from the heart. That's what he's looking for.

Turn with me to Ephesians chapter 4. I'm praying that this would help somebody. Again, I've said there have been families that have been divided and haven't talked for years over something so minute. Ephesians chapter 4 verse 31.

Again, look what it says. Ephesians chapter 4 verse 31. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking put away from you with all malice and be kind ye one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Listen, if we all took this to heart, this would transform all of our relationships. This would reconcile husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, friendships, churches. We could only do this.

Also, forgiveness means choosing obedience over feelings. Turn back to Matthew chapter 18. Matthew chapter 18, look in verse 22 again.

And Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times, but until 70 times seven. Forgiveness is first an act of obedience before it becomes an emotion. Many people say, but I don't feel ready to forgive.

How many have said that? But I don't feel ready to forgive. You don't know how much it hurt me. The truth is that forgiveness is really initiated by feelings.

You realize that. When you allow your feelings to control what God has called you to do, and it happens so easily, doesn't it? Our flesh get in the way. Our pride gets in the way.

Listen, it's all of us. We're all guilty of this. It is initiated by faith.

Forgiveness is initiated by faith. Feelings is often follows obedience. You realize that.

Now, a lot of you know my testimony, working as a correction officer. I felt that this captain really offended me, and I was filled with bitterness over it to the point I threatened him. Of course, they couldn't prove it.

They put me in a tower, and I was festering up there with anger and bitterness, and it was overwhelming me. But God had placed another correction officer who was going up to me.

Every time he would relieve me for my lunch break, he would leave a track or something on the desk in the tower.

Of course, there's nothing you can do. You have all these weapons around you. You have a whole field of inmates that you're watching that would not escape, and you're up there all by yourself.

And sure enough, I started reading these things, and then I came to the point where God started dealing with me, and I knew that if I died, I would stand before him guilty by reading the scriptures, and then I realized I needed to ask him to forgive me. Just as that servant did with the king, and I got down on my knees, and I said, Lord, forgive me a sinner. I believe that you died on that cross for me, and I come before you broken and ask for forgiveness.

You know, he saved me. My life was totally changed there, but you know what? I had my little pocket Bible looking around, reading my Bible up in the tower, had my finances. You know, God started working on me and working on me and working on me, and it was a Sunday being in that tower, and God would not let me go without forgiving the captain.

You know what I did? I grabbed the phone. I knew everywhere he went, I knew his schedule. That's how much I had in my heart of bitterness and anger towards him.

I knew everywhere he went, and I knew when he was in his office, and sure enough, I called, and I picked up that phone, and he answered, and I said, Captain such and such. He said, yeah, and he like hold, because he knew who he was talking to, and he said, what do you want? And I said, I just want to know if you can forgive me for the anger I had in my heart towards you, and he stood there. I mean, I didn't see him, but just feeling it, you could have pushed him over with a feather, and then he said, yes, and I said, thank you, Captain, and I hung up that phone, and he called the other Christian that was leaving those things.

What did you do to this guy? It wasn't what that he did. It was what he did, and you know, the story is when I hung up that phone, here's what I want to teach you all. When I hung up that phone, I sat back in my chair, and it was this peace that was like a warm rain that over flooded me.

This peace that just came upon me, and I sat in my chair, and it was like, yeah, I was saved. Oh, I was saved. I was bound to heaven, but God says, hey, you need to release him.

You need to forgive him so I can more fill you with peace and love. Listen, I learned a lot that day. I learned how bitterness and unforgiveness and anger was eating me up, even though I was saved.

God would say, listen, let him go. God commands forgiveness, not because it's easy, because it's

right. Turn with me to Luke, Luke chapter 17.

Luke says in verse 3, Luke chapter 17, verse 3, and this is Jesus again speaking, and he says, take heed to yourselves. If thy brother transgress against thee, rebuke him, and if he repent, forgive him, forgive him, and if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in the day, turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him. See, that's not for him, that's for you, and the question is, how can God forgive you and I if you can't forgive your brother? Amen? Forgiveness is a decision of the will.

It's not about feelings. It's the same thing with love. Do you realize that? Love is from the will.

You choose to love someone. Yeah, I know when they're pretty and smelling good, and that's easy, right? But listen, you choose to love someone. You choose to say, I will love you, and I will put myself in a position where I can be easily hurt.

How many know what I'm talking about? I will open myself up, I will show you, I will take away all my defenses, so you see my heart, so my heart will niche with your heart, and yes, there'll be times when you hurt me, but I will still love you and forgive you. Isn't that what, listen, isn't that what God has done with you and I? Do you realize that when we obey God's command to forgive, we place ourselves in a position where God can heal the wounds of our hearts? If you're not willing to forgive, how can he heal so many families, so many relationships over years and years, decades, and not been healed by the great healer of the heart because they choose not to forgive? Lastly, forgiveness means forgiving from the heart. Back in Matthew chapter 18, verse 35, the Bible says, so likewise shall my heavenly father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone and his brother of their trespasses.

Do you realize this is what was happening to me? There was tension between me and God until I made it right with him, and it's the same thing. Jesus is not describing a superficial forgiveness. He's speaking genuine forgiveness.

Amen? Forgiveness that reaches the deepest level. Nothing displays God's glory more beautifully than undeserved mercy. Think of that.

They don't deserve it, but yet you will forgive them. Man, if we could learn this, if we, listen, this wasn't written for them in them days. This is written for us in our day, in our lives, in our situations, in our relationships.

This is for us. Forgiveness from the heart means what? Refusing to rehearse the offense repeatedly. How many times you've seen that? Well, you remember what you did to me? Refusing to weaponize the offense later.

How many times? We all do it. We all do it. Getting a little spit and a little spat, and then you

use something that was done in the past as a weapon.

And here's the big one. Refusing to allow bitterness to take root. That's where your emotions come.

Oh, I've been hurt. Amen? A whole month later comes, a whole month, a year comes, and you're still... God says, refuse. Forgive from your heart.

Choose to forgive so you are not filled with bitterness. And remember how much I forgave you. How dare you not forgive them? Hebrews chapter 12, Hebrews chapter 12, verse 14, the Bible says, follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springeth up, troubleth you. Know what he's saying here? Is watch your heart. Forgive right away.

Forgive from your heart. I'm here to tell you that the older you get, the closer to death you come. When you look back in your life, and you see how insignificant that little offense that someone's done to you, and you've held it for so long with so much bitter, so much anger, and how you lost out so much when you could have brought that and worked it out, and forgave from the heart, and recognize that you had a whole future with this person.

Families have not talked to each other for decades. Let that not be us. Amen? Let that not be us.

When we forgive others, we must clearly reflect the God who's forgiven us. Let us be the same way. Listen, I'm here to tell you, life is too short.

There's someone that God's brought in your mind. There's somebody that God's brought to you because of all that's been said. And God's saying, just like he said to me or with the captain, he says, go and fix this so I can bless you, so I can release you out of the own bitterness jail that you put yourself in, so I can begin to heal all the hurt that you've gone through.

Decide now to forgive. Before it's too late. Amen? Why don't we stand? This is for all of us.

We all deal with this. We've all been hurt. We've all had people slander us.

We've all had people do ugly stuff to us. And God says, because I have forgiven you, forgive them, as Jesus said. Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do.

And let God heal us, each and every one of us, so that we can live with the joy and the peace that God wants to give us, if we would only choose to forgive like he's forgiven us. Let's pray. Father, we thank you.

Father, I pray, Lord, that you would do a work in each and every one of our hearts. So many of us are holding on to offenses. So many of us are not giving up the bitterness that's overwhelmed us.

And Father, I pray that you would do a work in every one of us, that you would restore our relationships with our family members, our friends, neighbors, co-workers, church members. Father, help us. Help us to lay down our sword.

Help us to lay down that tongue that we always have. And Father, help us to truly forgive from the heart. Father, may we bless you.

May we look like you, showing love and mercy and kindness towards those who offend us. Father, may it be us that will lay down our sword. And Father, we thank you for what you do in our lives.

We thank you what you do in our hearts, Lord. And Father, so hard to lay aside our feelings when we're hurt. But Father, help us to obey you by forgiving those who trespass against us.

And this I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.