

# Forgiveness

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[ 0 : 00 ] Amen. So we finished up Daniel. So we're going to take a couple of weeks where we're just going to do some different topics. And I'm letting my Wednesday night small group catch up on Daniel.

They've got one more Daniel lesson next week. And so then we're going to start into the Ten Commandments and talk about the Ten Commandments for a while. I think that'll be good for us. That'll get us through probably the end of the semester.

Then we'll take the summer off again like we did last year and do some different things. So I wanted to deal with a subject matter that I think is an important subject matter. You know, it's really important to talk about forgiveness.

And particularly because I think we struggle with forgiveness. I think forgiveness is a hard thing. And I wanted to ask you, why do you think? Because I'm assuming you agree with me, but maybe it's easy for you.

But if you agree with me, why do you think forgiveness is so hard? Why is it so hard to forgive? I think people think they've been wrong.

[ 1 : 06 ] And then most people want a payback. They want to pay them back instead of letting them get away with it. Okay. A strong sense of justice.

Yeah. Okay. That's good. That's good. What else do you think? A deep hurt. A deep hurt. Yeah. I don't know.

Yeah. I don't necessarily. When someone hurts me and it's hard for me to forgive them, it's not. I don't want to get back at them.

I just, I can't understand why that person did what they did. Right. Right. So it's really more of a, of, of not so much a sense of justice, but a sense of purpose and reason.

Why? Yeah. Why is that happening? Yeah. Why? Why did you do that? Yeah. That's, that's good. That's good. I think sometimes too, you do forgive. You want to forgive.

[ 2 : 07 ] You want to forgive. And you think you have. And then all of a sudden it's back in your mind and you're going over it again. You know, it doesn't completely leave. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

That's true. That's true. I think that if you forgive someone, there's fear that they can do it again. You know. Yeah. I've given you another opportunity to hurt me.

Yeah. If I forgive you. Yeah. That's true. That's true. You know, I had written down just a couple of thoughts. One was kind of what you were saying, Jill, is this idea that we've, we've heard of the stories where somebody has been abused somehow, you know, I mean, you can think of, you know, physical abuse, mental abuse.

You can think of sexual abuse. You can think of the sex trafficking. You can think of assault. So many things you can think of where that just seems like a harder thing to live in forgiveness over versus someone who's talking about me behind my back.

Right. You know. Or someone who cuts in front of me in the grocery line and they check out quicker than me. You know, because, you know, those things seem really small and insignificant compared to these other things that are life-altering and even dangerous, you know.

[ 3 : 23 ] And I think, I think those things make it difficult for us to think about forgiveness in the right way. I also think there's a verse in Matthew.

Jesus says this at the end of the, how's the, yeah, that's a pretty decent, is that too light colored? It's light on light. Oh, wow. You could turn it a little.

Yeah, so, is that good? That's good. Can y'all see that? Okay. Okay. This verse is interesting. It's at the end of the Lord's prayer, the model prayer.

And after he's told them that they need to forgive, he says, for if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your father will not forgive your transgressions.

Okay. That, that's a hard verse. Right. That almost makes it sound as though that if I don't live in forgiveness, I'm going to lose my salvation or something like that.

[ 4 : 26 ] Now, it's not talking about that. We know it can't be because so many other places in scripture teaches something else about our salvation and how secure our salvation is.

But I do think that, that it's a, it's an important verse for us to, to be mindful of. And we'll come back to that verse here in a little while to kind of see where we're going with that.

But I want us to talk about first, uh, what, what we call lies about forgiveness. And I have seven of them. In other words, these are things that people believe that I don't think are true.

Okay. These are things people believe Christians believe that I don't think are true. The first one is this forgiveness is something you have to feel. I think a lot of people have struggled to forgive because they can't feel it because they feel the hurt rather than they feel forgiveness.

They feel a hurt or an anger rather than love or something like that. And it's almost as though we're saying we've got to feel the forgiveness before we can offer the forgiveness.

[ 5 : 28 ] But here's the truth. The truth is that forgiveness is a command. We're commanded to forgive. Ephesians 4 32 says, be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God and Christ also forgave you.

It's a command. It's not about what you feel about towards a person. It's about what you do. And we're going to talk more about that.

And hopefully that'll open up. But the second, the second law that a lot of people believe is that forgiveness means you have to forget. Okay. How many of you have heard this before?

How many of you, how many of you, where did you hear this from? Who told you that? I might get church.

What do you think there's any biblical basis to this idea? Well, we know that God said something about when he forgives our sins, he, something about the east and the west, he's living so far.

[ 6 : 39 ] Uh-huh. So we think about that as, you know, maybe he didn't think about it, he forgets it. Okay. Okay. So maybe that's why we think, you know, that to forgive is also to forget.

What does it mean to forget? What is it to forget? Well, let me ask. Well, let me ask the question this way.

Is forgetting something that you actively do or passively do? I think you have to actively in some cases. Some things you forget, read up the keys and all that kind of stuff.

That just kind of happens. But sometimes when you're trying to forgive somebody, it's hard to forget when somebody hurts you really bad, a close person that you love.

And it's hard to forget they did that. Because you're, it's like slacking the dog. He looks at you and goes, ugh, did you hit me again? So let me ask you this. Is forgetting sometimes something that you don't want to do?

[ 7 : 50 ] Just generally speaking? Do you have things that you have forgotten that you wish you had not forgotten? Yes. So, so the essence is this, is that forgetting something has to do with a problem with our minds.

I want to remember something. I want to remember my times tables. I want to remember when my kids were little and things they did, but I forget those things because my mind's not working properly.

So to say that we need to forgive and forget almost has this sense in which we, we want to try to actively make our minds do something that normally we don't want it to do. So, so there's, we've got to look at this.

And I think that passive active part is kind of a part of this. I think that we need to think of it in a different way. Hebrews chapter eight, verse 12 says, for I will be merciful to their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more.

Now think about God for a second. He's all knowing. Can he forget? No, no, he can't forget.

[ 9 : 04 ] So he says, I will remember their sins no more. Does that mean that it's, he's somehow found the data bank in his brain and deleted that? No, there's something else going on here besides scrubbing the memories of my mind, right?

There's something else going on here. And I think it's an active act of God whereby he chooses not to remember this thing.

It's not the same thing as forgetting, right? Like choosing to not remember is an act of not holding something against someone. Let me say that again.

If I'm going to forgive someone and that means I'm going to choose not to remember it. What that means is I'm choosing not to hold it against them.

It doesn't mean that I, it's not going to pop into my mind. It doesn't mean that it's scrubbed from my memory banks. You know, I, it's, have you seen the movie? I mean, maybe y'all haven't seen that movie.

[10:10] There's a movie called Men in Black. And one of the things that they do in this, this movie is that people see aliens and they don't want people to think that they saw aliens. So they have this little wand that they say, look right here in this light and you go poof and they flash people.

And when they do, they go like, they forgot everything for the last five minutes. And I think that we would love to have something like that with the hurts that people do. And when we forgive someone, we would love to be able to flash ourselves and forget it so that we don't have to remember it again.

But that is not the way this works. Our minds don't work that way. We choose to not remember, which means that we're not going to hold it against them. That's all that means.

It doesn't mean that I've got to scrub my brain, right? Okay. So that's, that's enough on that. We'll move on. We'll kind of come back to some of these themes as we hit the other things. All right.

So, uh, third thing, forgiveness means you were condoning their actions. Forgiveness means you're condoning their actions.

[11:12] Do y'all think that's true? No. Now, why is, why is it not true? Forgiveness is for you. It's a cleansing in yourself about that other person.

That other person is going to go and do whatever they're going to do. But the forgiveness is what, not forgiving is what eats you up inside. Have you heard of people saying such a thing as this?

Or thinking such a thing as this? So, so, so one of the things that we need to think about biblically, let's just, let's just think about it this way. Psalm 50 verse 6.

The heavens declare his righteousness for God himself is judge. God himself is judge. So, so this is the way that I would think about it. If a prisoner is set free from prison, does that condone his crime? No, he's paid his price, right? He's paid his due to society. So now he can be set free. So, if you stay with that sort of analogy about forgiveness, a lower court gives up jurisdiction over a crime to a higher court, right?

[12:25] So, when we forgive someone, what we're doing is we're giving up jurisdiction of that crime against us to God as the higher court. He's the judge.

He's the one that gives recompense. Vengeance is mine, says the Lord. So, he's the one who gets to say those things, right? We don't. We give up our right when we forgive someone. So, we're not condoning their actions.

We're just turning them over to God. Okay? Okay? What about, what about in those, in that case, about associating with people like that?

I mean, I mean, you could even talk about family. Do you continue to forgive them? That's a great question. We're going to... Do you continue to have a relationship with them?

We're going to talk about that. That's coming up. That's coming up. That's a... But that's a great question. That's a great question because that's a question a lot of people want to know. If I've forgiven them, what's the relationship like now?

[13:27] So, okay. Well, let's move to this next one. And that is that forgiveness makes you a doormat. Forgiveness makes you a doormat. Now, this is a lie that Christians believe.

How is this a lie? Why? Because it doesn't make you a doormat. In what way? Just because you forgive someone doesn't mean you let them walk all over you.

Okay. Why? Because the Lord has forgiven us that we don't... I don't know.

Okay. That's okay. It's okay that you don't know. See, here's the thing I want to push towards.

There's a lot of little phrases that we know and we say. And we don't know why we say them. There are things back there in the scriptures that we kind of go like, well, let's tie this back to something.

Right? Let's tie this back to some scripture. Sure. Often inside families or very close relationships, that's where we're talking about this. Because there's a pattern of hurt.

[ 14 : 36 ] And so if I forgive them, they're going to do this again and hurt me again. It's just, I'm just going to make myself a doormat. So I want to look at a couple of verses. 1 Corinthians 13, 5, and 6 talks about... This is verses 4 through 8 that says love is...

And it gives all these things that love is. And it says that love does not act unbecoming or unbecomingly. It does not seek its own. It is not provoked. It does not take into a wrong suffered. It does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. And so if you just read that much of that, you would kind of think to yourself, you know, this sort of sounds like I've got to make myself a doormat.

It doesn't consider... It doesn't... It takes no account of a wrong suffered. If I love them and I forgive them, then I can't think about their wrong that they did to me again.

And we're going to talk about that. We really are not supposed to do that. Right? Yes? But if they love you, then they don't want to keep doing the thing that hurts you. I understand that.

[ 15 : 35 ] But right now, all I can do is talk about me. Okay. Right? So... And that's kind of a thing, too, that we could get into, but I'll pass that by. But here's the thing.

The... I think I have the wrong verse on my screen here. Somebody look up 1 Corinthians 13, verse 7 and 8. Mine says, love never gives up, never loses faith.

It's always helpful and endures through every certain thing. Okay. I need a different translation.

What translation is that? Because that's not ringing my bell. NLT.

Yeah, what do you have? Shares all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. Oh, I'm sorry. It's on the screen.

So verse 5 is all of this. Verse 6 is... We forget. I forget. Verse 6 says, love does not rejoice in unrighteousness.

[ 16 : 42 ] If someone sins against me, and I'm not going to count it as a wrong suffered, I also cannot rejoice in unrighteousness. They're committing unrighteousness.

So I've got two sides of me that says I must forgive. But at the same time, I can't just allow them to do whatever they want to. That's where Paul talks about if food causes my brother to stumble, I will not eat meat again so that I will not cause my brother to stumble.

Sometimes I can forgive someone. But there's still some sort of action that's going on after the forgiveness that enables or encourages this person to sin against me again.

Now, don't hear me say that you're responsible for somebody sinning against you. That's not what I'm saying. But for some people, okay, in the worst of cases, an abuser, if the wife forgives her abusing husband, and yet she doesn't change her actions and keeps herself in that situation, then she's enabling her husband to continue to sin against her.

You understand what I'm saying? I'm saying that she's going to have to remove herself from that situation to not enable him to continue to do that sin.

[ 17 : 57 ] So there's a sense in which sometimes a separation has to happen in order to not enable a person to sin. Now, sometimes it's not just my presence that causes someone to sin.

That's kind of in the worst case scenario, right? Sometimes I've forgiven somebody, but sometimes I can provoke them. And we're not supposed to do that either, right?

So the point is, is that in this particular lie, forgiveness makes you a doormat. It doesn't make you a doormat. And the reason it doesn't is because there are other biblical commands that we are supposed to be obedient to that talk about confronting people in their sin.

Right? Right? So, and then if there's some sort of danger, then absolutely I think we've got to get out of the way. We cannot enable sinful behavior.

The next lie is forgiveness means you have to be friends again. Forgiveness means you have to be friends again. And this is often in family relationships, teenagers, you know, we were friends, they did this thing, does this mean I have to hang out with them again?

[ 19 : 06 ] Well, on the level of being friends, that's kind of difficult because, or I mean, that's kind of easy because if you're just friends, you don't live together.

And so you don't have to hang out with them. But if it's a family relationship, siblings or something like that, that's a little bit harder because now you're stuck in the same household. How do you handle that? A couple of passages come to mind.

One is 2 Corinthians 2, 14 and 15. But thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of him in every place.

For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. And he goes on to talk about that aroma is different for different groups. In other words, I am going to live with people. And as I try to present the gospel, as I try to live out the Christian life, the same gospel that I preach to some people, it's going to make them want to follow Christ.

[ 20 : 11 ] And for some people, it's going to make them want to run away from Christ. So, in other words, there are just different groups of people out there, some following after Christ, some not following after Christ.

And part of what we're supposed to do as Christians is that our lives are not supposed to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. So, as we live a Christian life, as we try to preach the gospel, somebody sins against us and then we need to forgive them, it could be that this person is not a Christian.

So, if they're not a Christian, then maybe we shouldn't have been friends with them in the first place like we were. You know, I've seen way too many Christians, particularly in like teenagers, who are friends and good friends with somebody who's a complete unbeliever.

And then in that hurt, then they walk away and I'm kind of going like, well, what did you expect an unbeliever to do? Right? The other thing that Paul says is that 1 Corinthians 15 says, do not be deceived, bad company corrupts good morals.

Who we choose to bind our lives with is important. Who we choose to be around is important.

[ 21 : 26 ] We should choose to be with people who will encourage us towards Christ, who will encourage us to love Christ, who will encourage us to run after Christ.

And so, if we've had someone who has sinned against us, then either this is a Christian who recognizes it and then wants to confess and wants to repent and we'll talk about that and there can be reconciliation.

Or it's somebody who's not a Christian and being friends with them is not really the thing you should do. Anyway. What about discipleship?

Aren't you supposed to talk to people that aren't Christians? Yes, you are. Doesn't mean not hang around. But there's a difference. There's a difference between me sitting with someone and taking them through the Bible for their good, for their evangelism, for the gospel's sake.

And me going to the river with them and hanging out all day and spending our lives together. Or looking to them to fill your needs. Or looking to them to fill my needs.

[ 22 : 34 ] Yeah. Yeah. No. You have a different mindset. Right. Right. Because I can see teenagers, you know, they're trying to be good and do it, but all this stuff is new and informal.

And maybe they want to be a little bad boy every once in a while. Maybe they want to go to the river and drink beer all day. They know it's not right. I mean, teenagers are a whole different category. A little bit. A little bit. We're a lot more like them than we think we are, though. Only in big people form. What about an adult that, I mean, teenagers are completely different.

But what about an adult that professes to be a Christian and does not come to you and say, I am going to do this and does it behind your back and doesn't say, I want to do this.

And so, so with anybody that we're talking about, with anybody that does something, your first step is to pull the log out of your own eye.

[ 23 : 44 ] Okay. And think to yourself, before I even look at what they've done, I need to be sure that I'm confessed up with the Lord, that I don't have anything.

Then the second step is their actions that they took. Is it really sinful or does it just bother me? Because sometimes people do things that are not sinful, but we're bothered by it.

And instead of us saying, oh, I need to forgive them, it's really about us needing forgiveness because we're bothered by something that we shouldn't have been bothered by. So that's the next step. Is this a sin?

If it is a sin, then we're going to get to in a little bit, what do I do if I'm sinned against? Okay. Does that help? Yep. Okay.

The next one is forgiveness comes from an apology or an action. In other words, they've got to do something before I give forgiveness. They've got to either apologize, they've got to take some sort of action.

[ 24 : 44 ] And there's some people that they want that person to grovel. They want them to just absolutely grovel, be really, really sorry before you forgive them.

Like I'm going to hold on to this grudge and I'm going to hang on to it until you say you're sorry. And no, that really wasn't good enough. You're going to have to do it again and really mean it. Or you're going to have to do some things. But I want you to think about something. We saw this verse already, but Ephesians says, Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ forgave you.

How has God forgiven you in Christ? He put Christ upon the cross to pay for your sin.

In other words, forgiveness is not built upon the actions or the apology of another person.

Forgiveness is built on what God has done for us in Christ. The basis of forgiveness that I'm going to give to somebody is not built upon my feelings or their actions, but it's built upon what Christ has done.

[ 25 : 54 ] And we have to remember that because if we don't, we're going to kind of get this all askew. Okay? Last lie. Forgiveness is easy. Yeah.

Okay. So on one hand, we might say, yes, that's true because it's pretty easy to just say the words, I forgive and not mean it. or I forgive and want to mean it, but then later have trouble with it.

And that's the hard part. And it's not easy. It's not easy. So, okay. So those are all the lies. I have more here. I want to get into some teaching about forgiveness from a couple of passages, but do you have any questions about these lies?

Are you shocked by any of these lies? Are these things that maybe like you feel like you were told that this is the truth and I'm telling you these are wrong? Well, you always hear that I can forgive you, but I can't forget.

Yes. That's really common. Yeah. It doesn't surprise me, but it reminds me that it's always. Yeah. A lot of people will say that and then therefore a lot of Christians and even a lot of pastors will tell people that you have to forgive and forget.

[ 27 : 13 ] And I think that's a lie. Right. You know, I think that's a lie. I like that. I like that. I want to hold on to it. No, I'm just kidding. Who makes that a new rule?

All right. Well, let's talk then about forgiveness in two ways. One is, let's talk about an attitude of forgiveness, an attitude of forgiveness. In Mark 11, verse 25, Jesus is teaching and he says, whenever you stand praying, forgive if you have anything against anyone so that your father who's in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions.

So there's a couple of things about this. Okay. Number one, any verse we come to, we don't come to it by itself. We come to it from the rest of the word of God. We know that there's nothing that can separate us from the love of God and Christ Jesus.

If we're Christians, nothing can take our salvation away, even our own sin. So this is not talking about salvation issues. This is talking about Christian issues that our forgiveness, or let me just say it this way.

Forgiveness is never unconditional. Forgiveness is never unconditional. Now, some of you are going to be weirded out by that until I get through explaining it, but here we go.

[ 28 : 28 ] What happened for God to be able to forgive us? Christ. The condition for our forgiveness was Christ's death.

And the condition was met. So this passage is speaking about my stance before God in prayer. I'm by myself. It's just me and God. And if in that moment, as I'm praying, I remember somebody that I have something against, in that moment, I am to forgive them.

And the condition for that forgiveness is met already in Christ. He's already met the condition for that forgiveness. forgiveness. And so what I'm saying is, this is an internal attitude of forgiveness that I must have that I don't have to talk to anybody about.

I don't have to tell anybody about this internal attitude, but I must have this internal attitude. As I go to pray, and I know that so-and-so sinned against me, I do not have to wait for any other condition to be met other than what Christ has done for me to have an attitude, an internal mindset that forgives them.

[ 29 : 57 ] It's in me. Okay? It's an internal thing. Does that make sense? I'm really trying to stress this internal part because there's an external part to all of this in just a second.

What if you don't feel that? If you are praying to God and you say, I forgive them, or whoever it is, isn't that a lie?

You know what I'm saying? If you truly are in your heart, I mean, you know that you should, and you pray that you would, but if it's not in your heart, how can you tell God how to forgive that person?

Right. That's a great question. We're going to come back to it again, but let me just say right here, one of the things we've got to remember is that forgiveness and sin, we're talking about a lot of legal things, and we're not talking about how I feel.

How I feel is different. What we're talking about is God's commanded us to do certain things, and so we're going to do those things, and this is the way it seems Christianity works.

[ 31 : 15 ] Duty always leads the way for delight. In other words, my emotions almost always follow my obedience to the commands. So if I will be obedient to that command, then the emotions follow, right?

And so one of the things we've got to do is stop waiting to kind of feel like it and just do. Now, there are going to be times, and we'll come back to this again at the end, but I'm just going to say it here because I don't want to lose it.

There are going to be times that my emotions get all up in the way, and even though I've said I forgive them, I just feel so angry and bitter, and I'm just mad about that.

I'm hurt by that. If I have already come to the place of saying, Lord, I forgive them, and then I'm holding on to it, that's where I've got to come back to God, and I have to ask God to forgive me for being unforgiving.

You know what I'm saying? Is that kind of like choosing to love someone and then the feelings come? That's right. Yeah. Yeah. The light always follows duty.

[ 32 : 21 ] Always follows duty. Okay, so you're welcome. You're welcome. You're welcome. The second part of forgiveness is what I would call a transaction of forgiveness. Now, the transaction of forgiveness is not about what's inside of you.

It's not about you at all, right? This is Luke 17. Jesus says, Be on your guard. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.

And if he sins against you seven times a day and returns to you seven times saying, I repent, forgive him. So this person comes to you. They recognize that they have sinned against you. Maybe all they have is just simple regret. Maybe they have some kind of remorse, but it's not real repentance. Or maybe they have genuine repentance. You don't know. They're coming to you asking for forgiveness.

And the key is they're asking for forgiveness. And if that happens, the condition, two conditions have been met.

[ 33 : 23 ] Number one, Jesus has died for sin. And number two, they're asking for it. And if they ask for it, then we're obligated to extend that forgiveness.

In other words, we're giving them a word of forgiveness because this is about what's going on inside of them. This is a person who feels at least regret, remorse.

They're ashamed of what they've done. And it might be horrific, but they're coming. They're asking for forgiveness. It is our obligation to give them that word of forgiveness that they need to hear. So they don't have to know about our attitude of forgiveness. That's between us and God. But if they come ask, then we're to give them that word of forgiveness. But if they do not come to ask, we are not obligated to tell them that they are forgiven.

You understand what I'm saying? There's so many times you see, like in courtroom dramas, you know, in real life dramas, where the person who's perpetrated the crime, the family at the sentence time, gets to speak to them.

[ 34 : 34 ] And the person has not asked for forgiveness. And you will see people say, I forgive you. I'm not saying it's wrong to do that, but you're not obligated to do that.

Do you understand? If they come ask you, then you are obligated to tell them, I forgive you. And then now you got to work on the details of that.

Now, there's a lot to flesh out here that we'll get to in a second when we get into the practicing of these things. Because I'm going to, there's a ministry called Peacemaker Ministry. And they have, if somebody's going to come and confess sin and they're going to ask for forgiveness, there's seven A's that they need to do.

And then if you're going to forgive someone, there's four commitments that you need to make. And so we're going to look at those just so you have those tools in your toolbox. But let me pause. You understand the difference between attitude and the transaction of forgiveness?

Okay. Clears mud, right? Okay. Okay. So then, we want to talk then about how to practice forgiveness. And let's just say you're the person who's sinned against somebody else.

[ 35 : 41 ] You know, it could be, you know, between husband and wife. It could be between parents and children. It could be between siblings. It could be between you and somebody else in the church.

I think these seven A's help us to kind of think through all the things that we need to be thinking about as we go to forgive. Okay. You have a question?

Okay. Why is that verse there? I'm going to go ahead with that verse. My slides are out of order. Oh, you know what? I don't know why I was coming back to there at that time. So, all right. So here's, do I have this written down on your paper?

Okay, great. So, you see them all there, right? Address everyone that's involved. So, as far as your sin affects, that's how far you need to confess. You know, if it's just between you and another person, that's where you confess.

[ 36 : 41 ] But if it's between you and another person and other people saw it, you should go to them as well. Okay? You need to confess your sin. to everyone that's involved.

You need to avoid ifs, buts, or maybes. Would you please forgive me? I'm, I can't believe that I send against you. But if you hadn't done that, maybe next time you could do some, no excuses.

You can't, you can't bring excuses, you know? And, and that's the number one thing I hear so many people do, you know, my kids, when I would try to get them to, to work things out with one another, you could hear them say, would you forgive me for being angry?

I'm sorry I got angry because you yelled at me. You know what I'm saying? That's just, yeah, that's right. It's blame shifting. I'm sorry, but you really ticked me off. Yeah, that's right.

Okay. Admit specifically both your attitudes and actions. You know, that's the thing. When we, when we look at something like 1 John 1, 9, it talks about confessing our sins to the Lord.

[ 37 : 46 ] That word has to do with agreeing with God, saying that it's wrong and specifically what it was that we did. You know, it's not just about an attitude. And if we don't know specifically kind of how that person felt that and saw that, then we need to kind of understand that.

But we need to, to stick to the Bible to define what our sin is. Okay. We need to, we need God's law to tell us what our sin is. We, we need to acknowledge the hurt.

I mean, you have, you've hurt someone that ought to sorrow you. That you hurt someone and hurt someone that you love.

You know, when Jesus talks about when you're offering your gift and there, you remember someone has something against you, go be reconciled to them. To be reconciled is to pay restitution.

It's to go make sure they're okay before you even continue on with your worship to the Lord. Except the consequences, right?

[ 38 : 52 ] Some of those consequences could be that you've got to pay something back. they've had damages of some kind and what, what kinds of things can you do to, to put that back?

In a legal sense, out in the legal world, we know that like restitution is a part of the criminal law, right? People have to pay that back. Restitution, you know, if I've sinned against someone, then I've damaged them.

I've taken some from, something from them and I need to do things to build them back up. there was a, there was a, there was a, there was a guy that, that I worked with once who, he got to a really dark place and as a part of the consequences, you know, in, in dealing with his wife and this kind of a thing, we removed the guns from his house because there was some, some dark things going on there and so that was a part of the consequences he had to, to live with.

Um, we also need to alter behavior. You know, I, I think we struggle with this. I think we think that if I just ask for forgiveness and they forgive me, we're good and that, you know, it's never going to happen again but it probably will.

It probably will because we tend to sin in patterns. You know, I, I tend to be an angry person so my sin is almost always going to involve my anger somehow and so I've got to figure out how to deal with my anger.

[ 40 : 24 ] If I don't figure out how to deal with my anger biblically, then I can't alter my behavior and I, and I need to alter my behavior and, and, and I need to, I need to shift that, you know, so my, my dealing with my own sin means that I've got to deal with me.

I'm not just trying to patch it up so that life gets better. You know, you know, if I, if I sin against Michelle and she gets upset with me, you know, yeah, it might be really cold in the house for a while

in the middle of the summer.

Right? But I can't, I can't go to her to try to fix this problem just so I feel comfortable at home again. I have to see the hurt. I've accepted, I have to accept the consequences of that.

The consequences of her, you know, not wanting to be around me for, for a season or whatever, you know, or her crying and I don't want to see her cry. But also, I've got to work on changing the way I respond to things and that's a hard thing.

And you can't do that by yourself 99% of the time. That's where the church body comes in to play and, and, and accountability with another Christian. But then, we need to ask for forgiveness.

[ 41 : 33 ] And when you ask for forgiveness, you do not say, I am sorry. Let me just say this, as a Christian, you should almost never say, I am sorry.

Well, even the criminal is sorry, but it's, it's because they got caught, not because. Sorry just means I feel, I feel bad. Sorry is not acknowledging what the situation is.

If I say to you, you know, if I, if I, if I just, you know, yelled at you, I just, you know, ran over your dog or I stole something from you and I got caught, and I say to you, I'm sorry, it's all I, I just feel bad about it.

If I say, will you forgive me, that acknowledges I've wronged you. Right? If I, I also am not real keen on people saying I apologize because nobody really knows what the word apologize means anyway.

Right? Apologize means say you're sorry. The only time that I think it's appropriate to say I'm sorry is like a scenario where you, you got kids at the school and they're walking down the hallway and two guys are talking to each other and two girls are talking to each other and as they walk through the hallway their shoulders bump and the guy accidentally knocks the girl's books out of her hands and he says, oh, I'm sorry.

[ 42 : 58 ] Why is that? I feel bad. Why is that? Because I didn't sin against you but my actions did something that hurt you and that makes me feel bad. Here, let me help pick up your stuff.

Right? That's what I would tell my kids. If you've, if this was an accident, it's okay for you to say you're sorry but if this was on purpose, no, you have to say, will you forgive me?

Will you forgive me? Um, okay. Any questions about these seven A's? The four commitments will go pretty quick, I think. Yes, ma'am. I was just going to say, I think that the third one he admits specifically and referred to the scriptures, you know, we're not good at that.

No. We're not, as a culture and as a, you know, we have the familiarity with what the Bible's commands are to be able to, to identify and so a lot of times we resort to saying I'm sorry I made you mad.

Well, yeah, so yeah, then you're not looking at anything that you You shouldn't be so sensitive.

That's what I do. You shouldn't be so sensitive.

[ 44 : 03 ] Yeah, yeah. Why did I do? That's one of the reasons why I think a study through the Ten Commandments will be very helpful for us. That's a good plug. Good plug. Come back in two weeks.

Because like, you got to understand the Ten Commandments are not just bare law, it's case law. So, when you say you shall not murder, that covers a whole range of things.

Right? So, so yeah, we're not good because we don't know the commandments because we've been feeling our way through all of this. You know, you say something in maybe a difficult way to someone and tell them, you know, listen, I can't meet with you right now because I'm doing something else and they get offended.

Their feelings get hurt. That's not, that's not necessarily because I've sinned against them. That's probably because they're being too sensitive. And that's, that's a thing that happens. But yet, we felt something and then somebody comes along and says, hey, so and so's upset with you.

So you go to them and say, well, what's wrong? And they tell you and you, then now you feel bad. So you, you say, well, I'm sorry. And they say, okay, great, I feel better. You know, and everybody's just feeling towards each other and we're not really doing anything biblical at all.

[ 45 : 09 ] It needs to be very clearly, is this a sin? So many things that we get upset about from other people, it's not their sin against us. It's our perception of what they've done.

The first step to church discipline is self-discipline. Self-discipline. All right, so let's move on quickly. We got, we got, we got this here.

I think I've wrote, written these out in your paper as well. These are the four commitments you are making when you tell someone that you, yes, I forgive you.

Okay? They sinned against you and you're saying, yes, I forgive you. First, I will not dwell on this incident. In other words, I'm not going to actively bring it in my mind and play it around and rewind the tape and watch it again and just get mad again and rewind the tape and think about something else I could have said.

Now, I know some of you don't do that kind of a thing, but those of us like me, I have, I have a library of VHS tapes that it's very easy for me to get offended.

[ 46 : 15 ] There was a gentleman, he was our interim pastor at a church that I was at and he did not get voted in and he began to blame me. This is a church of about 300. I was the youth minister and he preached a sermon after the vote did not go through for him from our pulpit in which he chastised me in front of 300 people because I thwarted the will of God.

That led to me losing my job in two months and I had to find something to do with my family. Are you kidding? I'm not kidding. And I, and to this day, if I go back and pull that tape out and I watch those conversations, I can get mad enough that, because I'm very visceral with my, that sometimes I want to hit him and I'll be driving along and I'm thinking about it when I shouldn't and my arms deal like that and one of my kids will say, what are you thinking about?

They know you. But forgiveness means I'm not going to dwell on it again. I'm not going to pull out the VHS tape and watch it over and figure out a new way to try to hurt you or a new way to try to deal with the situation.

I'm done thinking about it. When I do that and dwell on it, I'm just miserable. It's like, I'm going to sit here and be miserable and think about this and have a horrible day until I...

It hurts you. It hurts you. That's why that attitude of forgiveness is so important. You know?

Because this gentleman died before we ever got a chance to talk again. And so I've never been able to look at him and say, I forgive you.

[ 47 : 48 ] But I don't have to do that to really forgive him. Because Christ has paid the price for him and me and Christ has paid the price for my lack of forgiveness. So, I'm making the commitment I will not play it in my head over and over again.

Okay? The second one, I will not bring up this incident again and use it against you. In other words, I'm not going to remind you about it. I'm not going to say to you two years later, hey, you remember when you did that thing?

And you know what? There was a gentleman that I knew that he and I, we were counseling together and he admitted to me his use of pornography and we began to try to work with him and his wife and this was a man who was seeking to lead his family the right way.

He was reading scripture with his family. He was praying with his family and when he admitted this and she offered forgiveness, then all of a sudden everything in the household switched around and he was no longer allowed to make decisions.

He was no longer allowed to read the Bible to the family. He was not allowed to pray because she said, no, no, you can't do that. You've ruined your chance on that and maybe one day and she was daily holding it against him what he had done even though she had said she forgives him.

[ 49 : 05 ] Now, I'm not saying that's an easy thing. There's a lot of consequences to your actions but if you're going to forgive, right, then some of those consequences are not up to you.

It's not, there's not a scripture that says husbands lead your wives or be the head of your home except if you commit these sins. No, he still has that responsibility and you talk about gut-wrenchingly hard to be a sinner and yet still responsible for leading your family.

She would have to say, I'm not going to bring up this incident again and I'm not going to hold it against you. Third commitment that we're making is I will not talk to others about this incident.

I mean, this is where we struggle. Somebody's done something to us and we just need to tell somebody so they can let us know that we are good and that person's bad.

It soothes our conscience to know when somebody tells us, oh no, that was bad of them. We feel justified in our anger but if we have forgiven, we're saying, listen, I'm not going to talk about this to somebody else.

[ 50 : 18 ] I'm not even going to bring it up in conversation so that my husband looks bad. Now, there are two exceptions to this. Okay? The first is this.

You're struggling with the first commitment. You keep dwelling on it and you know that's wrong and you want to get rid of it so you have a spiritual mentor.

Okay? It needs to be somebody who is more spiritually mature than you and you go to them to say, I'm having trouble with forgiveness. I can't forgive and I need accountability and help.

Now, you notice, you're not getting to talk about what the person did. You're going to talk about your lack of forgiveness. But the second person or the second exception is that you can talk to God about it.

You're struggling to forgive this person. It's playing in your mind. then you should be talking to God about it and asking God to forgive you for your lack of forgiveness of others.

[ 51 : 25 ] And I think that's what that Matthew 6, 14, and 15 is about is that our forgiveness for further sin and our feeling the forgiveness of God, if you want to say it that way, hinges upon us taking all of our forgiveness issues to Him and talking to Him about it.

I really think this is the issue of Matthew 6, 14, and 15. That's the third commitment. The fourth commitment is this, I will not let this incident stand between us or hinder our personal relationship. Now, with what we've said about friends, here's what I'm going to say about relationships. Every relationship should be biblical. Every relationship should be biblical.

So, a husband is to treat his wife in a biblical way. So, if she sins against me, the forgiveness that I give her and whatever else happens does not mean that I get to do something to that relationship differently than what the Bible tells me to do.

I still have to love her the way Christ loved the church. If I sin against my wife, it doesn't mean that she can all of a sudden stop being submissive to me. She still has to treat me with that same thing because that's what the Bible says.

[ 52 : 37 ] It's biblical. Now, the exceptions to that are when what we're doing enables one another to sin. Right? So, she can't enable me to sin and so, if it's that abusive person, she's got to leave in order to not continue that cycle.

She's got to stop that cycle. But, the idea is that we're going to try to put this relationship in a biblical framework and so, if it's a friend, it's somebody that doesn't live with you but it's somebody you've hung out with and they talked about you behind your back and they gossiped and that's a sin and you confronted them and they asked for forgiveness but it's been a pattern and you're kind of going like, man, every time I just keep getting hurt, what do I do?

There's nothing in the world that says that you must be buddy-buddies with them. You have to treat them biblically but biblically does not mean that you're going to be best buds again like you were but you can't treat them unbiblically.

You've got to treat them biblically. What does that mean? Well, you've got to bear one another's burdens, encourage them, you've got to admonish them, you've got to point out sin and so, we lean on the biblical definitions of relationships and what we should do in those relationships.

I tend to put this in different ways, these four commitments that I think are a little bit more memorable. I will not bring it up to you, I will not bring it up to others, I will not bring it up to myself, I will talk to God alone about it.

[ 54 : 07 ] Those are the commitments that I'm making. Just another way of saying it. I will not bring it up to you, I will not bring it up to others, I will not bring it up to myself, I will talk to God alone about it. And you know, I guess the final thing I would say is this, all of us are going to struggle to forgive.

And there may be like me, maybe you've got somebody from 20 years ago that every now and then it's tempting to pull the tape off the shelf and play it again.

The good news, the good news is that Christ died for that and it's covered. And not only did he die for that and is it covered, but he died in such a way as to empower you to close the door on that shelf and not pick it up again.

not by your willpower but by the power of the Holy Spirit. And that's the good news. That's the good news. Let's pray. Well,