

Forgiveness

by

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Forgiveness is the release from the mind and heart of the offended feelings of resentment toward an offender, which feelings, if continued, will hinder the spiritual and emotional growth of the offended.

Jesus spoke of innocent party who remembered that someone had a complaint against him. He said *“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother”* (Matt. 18:15). This is quite contrary to human beings. We want till the offender come to us to plead for forgiveness. Sometimes it is difficult and when it can’t happen, we end up losing our brethren in Christ. Here Jesus spoke of one who causes the sin (Luke 17:3); compare Gal 6:1; 2 Thess. 3:15; James 5:19-20) in this teaching of Jesus, the one who is sinned against must take the initiative and go to the offending brother. Let us be honest and ask, “How many times have we taken the initiative to go and talk to our brethren who have offended us in the church?” How many? God our Father is ready to forgive us our sins (Psa. 86:5); why are we not ready to forgive those who sin against us?

God has always come down to look for sinners in order to forgive. The Bible says *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”* (Rom. 5:8-9). The love of God had to be manifested by the death of the son for those who were unworthy. If the cross were the result of debt which God had to pay for the merit of those who kept law and performed meritorious deeds, then there would be no manifestation in the payment of the debt.

God does not want any to parish the Bible says, *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”* (2 Pet. 3:9). Brethren, let us soften our hearts and have the spirit of love, ready to forgive those who sin against us by going to them instead of waiting till they come to ask for forgiveness. By so doing we shall gain our brothers who could perhaps get lost.

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