

Love and Forgiveness

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- [0 : 0 0] Maybe you haven't seen them, who they exactly are. So I'm going to have them come up here, and we'll sing a few songs for you. And then they'll sit back down in their seats.
- So you can't come. Maybe you can just walk right up here. So let's see if I can remember.
- I'm getting a little bit older too already. So Jeremiah is 13. He's going to be 14 next week. And then Benaiah, he is 12. And Ezra is 11.
- And then we have Sakai, who's 9. And Eliana is 8. Yonatan is 6.
- It's going to be 7 next week. Yeah. And then Eberle is 4. And Channa is 2. And Micah is 9 months, almost 10 months. Almost 10 months.
- [1 : 0 5] So I told them this morning that they should practice a few songs. I'll try and see if I can help them sing. In his time. In his time. In his time.
- In his time. He makes all things beautiful. In his time.
- Lord, please show me every day. Lord, please show me every day. As you're teaching me your way.
- That you do just what you say. In your time. In your time.
- In your time. In your time. In your time. You make all things beautiful.
- [2 : 1 0] In your time. Lord, my life to you I bring.
- May each song I have to sing. Be to you a lovely thing.
- In your time. In your time.
- All march out. At the mention of his name. Take a hand.
- Take a hand. Take a hand. Take a hand. Take a hand. Take a hand. Take a hand. Take a hand.
- [3 : 3 8] I want to talk tonight about love and forgiveness. forgiveness. And. Christ is our perfect example of that.
- God is our perfect example of love and forgiveness. So again, just like we have done the other couple of nights. Let us get on our knees and let us seek the Lord.
- Lord. Let us ask him to speak to us. Let us ask him to speak to us. Let us ask him to speak to us. I'm only a man. And I only want to, again, just be an instrument in God's hands. I want to raise these words that we find in God's word.
- This is not old bread. It's new bread. It comes from God's cupboard. It's God's word. And though I might not be able to bring it forth eloquently.
- Look at the heart of Christ. Look at what God's desire is for us. If we do not have these two things. Love and forgiveness. In our walk as a believer.
- [4 : 3 7] We have nothing. These are key elements in our walk with Christ. And we stumble and fall if we are not willing to be obedient to these two things.

So let's ask God to speak to us through his word. That we, just with openness, just like what we sang here. I surrender all. Let's also surrender this aspect of our life to the Lord.

So let's call upon the Lord. And seek his face for what he wants to feed us tonight. Thank you.

Father, we're thankful to you that you loved us. You cared for us. And when we had everything against you.

When we were walking away from you. You drew us by your love. And you spoke kind words to us. You sought us. And we were lost sheep. Your love is what drew us.

[6 : 07] Your tender call. Your tender voice. You drew us. Though we had strayed from you. And we were that one lost sheep, Lord. And so tonight, Lord, we just want to say thank you, Lord, that you drew us and that you were willing to forgive us.

And I just pray, God, that you will speak to our hearts tonight. And that we will hear from you, God. God, these morsels of bread that we find in your word, God, on this topic.

We could not even talk about all the things tonight, God. But just a few things that we have there, God. I just pray that you will prick our hearts, God. And help us to, Lord, just be surrendered in this aspect.

We just ask, God, that your spirit would have complete liberty to touch each heart here tonight. It's not about us. It's about you, Lord.

And we want you to receive glory and honor as we seek to walk the narrow way. In Jesus' name, amen. I want to start with a little story about 16, maybe 17 years ago.

[7 : 31] A cousin of mine, her husband, he knew I was consolidating some of the debt that I had. I had some debt in different banks at that time.

And so I somehow had shared that with him, which was probably a mistake. I said, I'm opening a new account and I'm going to be borrowing money just at that place just to pay off everything else.

So I just have one payment each month. And so with him smelling this, he decided that he would rope me in and get me to borrow some money for him while I was at it.

And we agreed that every month he would make such and such a payment. And then he would try to get that paid off.

And that would give me the opportunity also to pay off the portion that he would like to borrow. And so tonight I'm not sharing this story with you because I am up here bitter or angry.

[8 : 42] I want to share with you what happened. So anyway, I did this, gave him the money, and the first few payments came in.

And then for some reason, which I don't know, maybe his own decision, he decided to stop helping me pay for this debt.

And this went on then for quite a few months. And one day I was watching this thing on John through Revelation.

And I was very convicted. In that video that I watched, John had a bowl of soup on the island.

And this other man who was there, I think somebody either spilled soup or did something. And he then took his bowl and he passed the bowl to the poor man whose soup I think was dumped.

[9 : 46] And that just broke me. Here I had been under this heavy weight. You know, this burden. I'm, you know, upset with him.

I can't love him. I'm angry with him. Why did he do this to me? And with a very broken heart, I then called him.

And at first I could not speak because of my emotional things I was dealing with. But eventually I shared with him, I forgive you. I forgive you the debt.

You do not have to pay me. And he just, no, no, no, no. It really, I think, touched him what I was sharing. But I said, no, I want you to know that I have forgiven you.

It's over. And when that happened, now wherever he stood with his issue was no longer on my shoulder.

[10 : 44] That's what God wants. So tonight as we read through some of these verses, it's not that it's easy to let go of things. But God does not want us to have that burden on our shoulders.

It doesn't mean that there are not issues, that those issues are not still there. It doesn't mean that the relationship can be completely restored. If the other party is not willing to make restoration, it still cannot be restored.

But in God's word, could any of you tonight lift up a verse that would say, well, in such and such a case, you do not have to forgive.

Anybody have a verse tonight? If we'd open the book of opinions or something like that, we might find it. But I don't think that's in the word of God. So in God's word, we find that we are to forgive.

And how did Christ forgive? What kind of conditions did he put on in forgiving us? What kind of conditions are there? If we're willing to receive it, like the other night we talked about repentance, turning away from sin, it's there, it's open for us.

[12 : 08] It's God's plan, like what we talked about the other night. That is what he tells us. We're going to read some of these verses. That's what he tells us, how we are to forgive. He tells us that we are to love the way that he loved.

God, there's a verse we're going to read about this too, pours his love into our hearts by his spirit. Do we want to make an impact on this generation?

Or do we want to be known the same as all the rest? You do something wrong to me, I'm not going to love you. I'm going to hate you. You will know that I despise you.

You will feel rejection. Or are we going to love the way Christ loved? When we, by faith, look at him, we can receive that forgiveness.

We receive that love. What did the thief on the cross, what did he have to offer Christ that he could receive this? He was moments, maybe an hour, or I don't know, away from his death.

[13 : 25] What could he bring to the table that he could receive God's love and God's forgiveness? Nothing. But he also did not have the opportunity, like we have, to continue in obedience to his word, to God's word.

But we are without excuse, if we have received God's love, and that we would walk in sin then, and be unforgiving and not loving to people. So in this case, I can assure you, sometime later, after I was married, this happened before I got married, with this, my cousin's husband.

We sat down. I don't know if some of you are familiar with the Tim Hortons or not. It's a coffee shop. In Canada, it's, yeah, it's all the way into Mexico, too, already, and probably other places.

But we went into this coffee shop together with them, and I could sit there, and I was totally at peace with them. And it was not because there was not an issue, but it was because I let the issue go.

So it doesn't have to be, it does not have to be on our shoulders. And may God, like I used this one example one time, may God help us.

[14 : 44] In any relationship, it's like a window. You know, we're beating each other, and we've got all, you know, we've got muddy hands, and we're throwing mud, and we're doing all kinds of stuff.

The relationship is broken. We can't see each other anymore. I believe tonight what God's heart is, not that we go outside to their side to clean the window, but that we clean our side.

So that, perchance, that person will have the opportunity to clean theirs, and we will see clearly again. But if it doesn't happen, let's make sure that our side is clean.

That's what God's burden is, because he does not want us to have those things on our shoulders. Because we read stories where someone was forgiven, and what did he do?

He went to his fellow man, and he said, pay me the debt that you owe me. So that's where we want to go tonight. As we read these verses, like I said, it is not with eloquent speech that I come to you tonight, but let us just look at what does God's word say, and let's be willing to apply it, and if there are windows that you already know, maybe there are things that are coming up in your mind already, let's make sure that we clean that window.

[16 : 00] So that if they are willing, that that relationship can be restored to the full. And if not, at least I can walk in peace, that I don't have anything stored up there. John 15, 12, this is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

This is a commandment. If it's a commandment, is it optional? Is it a suggestion? No. We find many things in God's word, and I've said about other topics too, the same thing.

When Jesus commands something, it's not an option and say, well, there might be a loophole around this thing. No, there's a loophole around this. He said, as I have loved you, so you are to love each other. We have to establish this in our hearts, that when Christ gives us a commandment, that He's not giving us room to do the opposite.

Where's the commandment that says, hate each other? Does it exist? It doesn't exist. What does this look like?

Sometimes it's going to be hard. It's going to be challenging. Sometimes in this flesh, if we were to walk in the flesh, we would do bad things.

[17 : 33] But that's not how we are called to walk. We are called to walk in the love of Christ. And it is not in our own strength. When He says that He pours His love into our hearts, I believe it's because if He wouldn't do that, we would do things.

We would do crazy things. How did He love us? That's where we need to go, like I shared already.

He loved us, and He showed us His love by laying down His life. And what does that look like for me and you?

Somebody has hurt us. Are we still willing to lay down our life? We have an opportunity to do good to those who have hurt us. Do we do it?

Are we still willing to, you know, if we see that they have a need, are we still willing to meet that need? In the flesh? No. way would we do that.

[18 : 31] We wouldn't even think of stopping if they have a flat tire or whatever the need might be that would arise. But Jesus doesn't say, depending on how big the need is, that you help them or you love them.

He says, love them as I have loved you. John 15, 13, greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

There is no greater love, he says. 1 John 3, 16, we know what real love is. I'm reading this in the New Living Translation.

We know what real love is because Jesus gave up His life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. I don't know how many of you are familiar with the story of Dirk Willems.

Maybe all of you are familiar with the story. But again, every time I read that story, I'm fresh reminded again. This is what it looks like. You're being chased by the thief catcher.

[19 : 38] You know that if he gets a hold of you, that's it. You're not going to beat him. You're not going to try to kill him even though he's your enemy.

He could run. He outran him. But when he started or fell through the ice, then the love of Christ was right there.

And he showed the love of Christ. I'm going to read the story just to remind us again. In the year 1569, a pious, faithful brother and follower of Jesus Christ named Dirk Willems was apprehended as a pirate in Holland and had to endure severe tyranny from the papists.

But as he had founded his faith not upon the drifting sand of human commandments, but upon the firm foundation shown, Christ Jesus, he, notwithstanding all evil, winds of human doctrine and heavy showers of tyrannical and severe persecution remained immovable and steadfast unto the end.

Wherefore, when the chief, when the chief, chief shepherd shall appear in the clouds of heaven and gather together his elect from all the ends of the earth, he shall also through grace hear the words, well done, good and faithful servant.

[20 : 56] Thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Concerning his apprehension is stated by trustworthy persons that when he fled he was hotly pursued by a thief catcher as there had been some frost that Dirk Willems ran before over the ice getting across with considerable pearl.

The thief catcher following him broke through when Dirk Willems perceiving that the former was in danger of his life quickly returned and aided him in getting out and thus saved his life.

The thief catcher wanted to let him go. Do you blame him? I'm sure that this love people cannot stand this love.

You love people like this they cannot stand it. Either it will change them and break them or they will just have to I don't know what exactly it does something to somebody.

The burgomaster very sternly called to him to consider his oath. Thus he was again seized by the thief catcher and at said place after severe imprisonment and great trials proceeding from the deceitful papists put to death at a lingering fire by these bloodthirsty ravening wolves enduring it with great steadfastness and confirming the genuine faith of the truth with his death and blood as an instructive example to all pious Christians of this time and to the everlasting disgrace of the Tyrannus Tyrannus Papus sorry for my pronunciation it's sometimes a little hard with some of these words.

[22 : 39] In this connection it is related as true from the trustworthy members of those who were present at the death of this pious witness of Jesus Christ that the place where this offering occurred was without aspirin on the side of Leardom and that a strong east wind blowing that day the kindled fire was much driven away from the upper part of his body as he stood at the stake in consequence of which this good man suffered a lingering death and so much in the town of Leardom towards which the wind was blowing he was heard to exclaim over 70 times oh my lord my god etc for which caused the judge or bailiff who was present on the horseback filled with sorrow and regret at the man's sufferings wheeled about his horse turning his back toward the place of execution and said to the executioner dispatch the man with a quick death but how or in what manner the executioner then dealt with this pious witness of Jesus I have not been able to learn except only that his life was consumed by the fire that he passed through the conflict with great steadfastness having commanded his soul into the hands of God in every trial that we go through with other people we need to do the same thing commending our soul into God's hands and allowing God to take over this story shows us true love not a selfish love but a compassionate love the love of God at work in the heart of a man the love of God was poured into this man's heart that's why he did what he did he would not have returned if he had walked in the flesh but he knew the end of his enemy life and where he would be if he was not willing to extend the love to him and take him out of this place where he was drowning

God's love what drove Dirk to help him was it a concern for his own well-being no he was not concerned about who he was or what he was going to experience he was concerned about that man are we concerned about where people will end up do they see God's love flowing from us in how we respond to different circumstances do they see that or is it my flesh that comes out when things get tough it'll make a complete difference Dirk could have run off and we wouldn't have known the story the way that we read the story now but I believe this is a beautiful example for us how we can in every situation that we come across how we should walk was it a show did he do it to be seen absolutely not so for us the same thing when we love on others does not need to be a show it needs to be done for God's kingdom for God's purpose no I believe the genuine love of God for the thief catcher's soul was what drove him it was a genuine love this type of love does not naturally flow out of us it is a God given love where would the thief catcher's soul be or have been at that moment if he had drowned lost for all eternity we don't know maybe there is a story out there maybe you can correct me what happened to this man later what did God do in his life how many times do we find ourselves in a situation where we have a hard time to love especially our enemy how would you and I respond if found in such a difficult situation what drives us in difficult situations are we driven by God's love love like Christ's love we can only overcome things in life if we are filled with the love of God this was not something that dirt worked up in his life this was that relationship that existed between him and God

I want to read here in 1st John chapter 2 verse 9 through 11 he that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother is in darkness even until now he that loveth his brother abideth in the light and there is none occasion of stumbling in him excuse me I find this found what he says at the ending of this there is none occasion of stumbling in him I don't know if I ever you know

I've read this over many times so if we want to walk without stumbling this has to be very real in our life but he that hateth his brother is in darkness and walketh in darkness and knoweth not whither he goeth because that darkness hath blinded his eyes when we do not walk in God's love there is a blindness in our life and it does not have to wonder us why we then stumble and falter and fall and just all kinds of things go wrong because we are unwilling to allow Christ's love to flow through us 1 John 3 11 through 17 for this is the message that ye heard from the beginning that we should love one another not as Cain who was of that wicked one and slew his brother and wherefore slew he him because his own works were evil and his brother's righteous marvel not my brethren if the world hate you we know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren excuse me he that loveth not his brother abideth in death whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him hereby perceive we the love of God because he laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren but whosoever hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need and shuteth up his bowels of compassion from him how dwelleth the love of God in him and this is the you know the last verse there is about needs that's not where we want to go exactly today but that is part of that we also we had a need we can take it from that aspect we had a need and did

Christ he had what it took to give us what we needed did he withhold it from us no he gave it and he gave it all so we are called to lay down our life just as he has laid down his life and what that exactly all looks like in our individual lives can vary because we all face different situations the important thing is that we walk in the love of God Romans 5 5 such hope in God's promise the amplified Bible in God's promises never disappoints us because God love has been abundantly poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us this is very very important that this has happened to us if we are not finding that we are walking victoriously in love towards others we need to seek this we need to seek that God would fill us with that type of love

[31 : 18] God's love abundantly poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit this should be the cry of our hearts our prayer our aim God fill me more and more with this love your love amen we all come into situations if we apply ourselves to walk in the spirit of God we can overcome difficult situations with love 1st Corinthians 13 1-13 if I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but have not love I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal and if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and I have all faith and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains but have not love I am nothing if I give away all I have and if I deliver up my body to be burned but have not love I gain nothing love is patient and kind love does not envy or boast it is not arrogant or rude it does not insist on its own way it is not irritable or resentful is that the type of love that we out of our flesh can give no this this is

God's love just like we read that verse there in Romans 5 God's love poured into our hearts that is how this happens that's something we can work up it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth love bears all things believes all things hopes all things endures all things love never ends as for prophecies they will pass away as for tongues they will cease as for knowledge it will pass away for we know in part and we prophesy in part but when the perfect comes the partial will pass away when I was a child I spoke like a child I thought like a child I reasoned like a child when I became a man I gave up childish ways for now we see in a mirror dimly but then face to face now I know in part then I shall know fully even as I have been fully known so now faith hope and love abide these three but the greatest of these is love something very important in this love to remember this love was there in the beginning of creation this love we read through the scriptures was there

God demonstrated his love to the children of Israel they disobeyed him many times and he continued to pour out his love and at times there had to be a discipline when Christ came again this love was just manifested to us shown to us the love of God this love has been here since his crucifixion until today this love will continue throughout eternity and we have an opportunity if we are willing to have God pour his love into our hearts so that the world and this generation will know that we walk with God we will have this love God's love with us for eternity but we also know the opposite if we reject God's word and we do not allow him to pour this love into our lives we will also be without this love for eternity but what a blessing if we have chosen

God's ways and he gives us this opportunity even again today God help me I want to welcome this love pour it to me opening ourselves up just like the song that we sang I surrender Lord I don't have what it takes but you do and I want it I'm going to hold on to you I think of Jacob when he was holding on to the angel pour this blessing on my life I need this or is there anybody here that does not need this we need this if we want to show the world who crisis this has to be a key element in our life John 13 34 a new commandment I give you love one another as I have loved you so you also must love one another Ephesians 4 verse 32 be kind and compassionate to one another forgiving each other just as in Christ God forgave you we started with loving as

Christ loved us now we are told to forgive as he has forgiven so he tells us that we are to love like he did and he tells us that we are to forgive like he did so two very important things and then I already talked about this before some of the things you know they're in my mind what things are attached how does he forgive and I know there's other verses but this verse is what I put on here psalm 103 verse 12 as far as the east is from the west so far hath he removed our transgressions from us who wants to measure how far that is and there's other places where he says that you know they're in the depth of the sea there's just there's multiple verses that we see how far removes these transgressions praise God Isaiah 43 verse 25 I Lord speaking yes I am he who blots out your transgressions listen what he says for my own sake for his sake he blots out our transgressions because he loved us if the transgressions are there they're in the way then his love cannot but if they are out of the way then we can experience

[37 : 27] God's love and remembers your sins no more 2nd Corinthians 5 21 for our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin that in him we might become the righteousness of God through the prophet Isaiah the Lord taught of the power of the Savior's atonement come now and let us reason together said the Lord though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool a thought just came to me here this we are reading here in Isaiah 1 verse 18 how many times just like what I was sharing about the window the Lord is the one who draws he's the one that shows his mercy he's the one that extends his forgiveness to us how many times do we put more mud on the window on our side instead of cleaning that thing off and actually knocking on hey clean your side I want this thing to be restored I want

I want to forget the thing that we had between us as far as east is to the west the Lord says we are to forgive as he does he says commandment what did he do he sought restoration with us he sought to save us he called us he was there drawing us except the Lord draw who can be saved you can't be saved except that happened if we are walking with Christ and we are forgiving as he did that we are going to seek restoration in relationships and it it will not always work we don't have to be frustrated or think that we haven't done our part because it doesn't work but we need to be willing to have our side clean very important Ephesians 1 verse 7 in him we have redemption through his blood forgiveness of sins in accordance with the riches of God's grace by shedding his blood by being rejected by being sacrificed he gave everything to forgive us how many times you know maybe we've sought once to make this thing right and then okay that's it

I'm giving up what did he do he went and did everything that it took for us to be redeemed that we could be forgiven how then should we forgive by giving everything to make sure we also have forgiven like Christ having that clear in any issue sometimes are very very hard things that we deal with but let's make sure that we take those things like I said before let's get rid of the burden on our own shoulders like Christ did take God's grace in our lives to be able to do that but forgive them so that when the opportunity does arise if it does arise that we are right there with open arms ready to receive Matthew 6 verse 4 if you forgive other people when they sin against you your heavenly father will also forgive you very important Colossians 3 verse 13 bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone forgive as the

Lord forgave you again as the Lord forgave you we find this multiple times so all we need to do to understand what he's talking about or what they're talking about is just look at how did he do it and then we have our answers Luke 6 verse 37 do not judge you will not be judged do not condemn and you will not be condemned forgive you will be forgiven their promises now let's turn to Matthew chapter 18 okay so here we're going to read from verse 23 to 35 therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants and when he had begun to reckon one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents but for as much as he had not to pay his Lord commanded him to be sold and his wife and children and all that he had and payment to be made the servant therefore fell down and worshipped him saying

Lord have patience with me and I will repay thee all and the Lord of that servant was moved with compassion and loosed him forgave him the debt 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 owe us and his fellow servant fell down at his feet and besought him saying have patience with me and I will pay thee all and he would not but went and cast him into prison till he should pay the debt so when his fellow servant saw what was done they were very sorry and some came and told unto their lord all that was done then his lord after he had called him said unto him oh thou wicked servant I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant even as I had pity on thee and the lord was wroth and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due unto him so likewise shall my heavenly father very important

[43 : 10] Jesus says this is what is going to happen if we are not willing to forgive others like Christ was willing to forgive us so likewise shall my heavenly father do also unto you if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses what allowance is there what kind of room is there to hold anything against anybody that zero allowance that doesn't exist if we think of the sum that we would owe our lord if we had to pay up we would not have to pay but he says I'm willing to forgive you he says I want you to do the same thing to other people the commandment if we are following

Christ we must not allow ourselves to be distracted by merely earthly things to not love things but to love God with all our heart and to love our neighbors as ourselves to love like Christ forgive like Christ simply put be like Christ walk as Christians put on the love of Christ let God pour his love into our hearts so that we can extend that same love to others we can give extend that same forgiveness to others and above all these put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony and let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which indeed you were called in one body and be thankful this is what God's commandment is for us as believers it's not my words it's our

Lord's words he says I want you to love others as I have loved you and he says I want you to forgive others as I have forgiven you this topic can be searched out much deeper than what I brought up here tonight there's many ways in which we can see how Christ loved us and many ways and many verses that we could have brought here about how he forgave us let's seek that so tonight again if you if you feel that God has spoken to you right where you are or even up front here let's just allow the Lord especially if you feel like we have failed in allowing God to pour his love into our hearts let's just ask the Lord tonight to pour that love into our hearts so that our side can be clean and maybe the Lord will make it possible that the other side will be clean it doesn't mean that we will walk with everybody in unity or have everything in common but it just simply means that we will do what Christ has commanded us to do so that our part will not be lacking so we'll not be like that servant who was bound up so yeah we'll just open it up for that if you feel that God has spoken to you again right in your chair or coming up here whatever you feel and then after that somebody has something to say you have to them we'll look at them we'll look at them you you you you you you you you