

SERMON NOTES: February 3, 2013

Dr. David Renwick

Lord's Prayer – "Relationships: Healing the Rift"

Forgiveness (Greek word = *aphiēmi* = 'let go')

Not just about releasing guilt

But about healing broken relationships

for us *from* God (forgive us our debts)

from us *for* others (as we forgive our debtors)

What do we gain by 'holding on'? Bitterness? Death? Broken relationships?

Forgiveness: Not Easy

. . . **BUT** this is our **Call** and **Prayer** as Followers of Christ

a. Jesus' example

On the Cross: "Father forgive them"

How? Trusting to God's Justice . . . 1 Peter 2:22

b. God's Forgiveness of Us:

Forgiving what?

Trespasses (*what we have done* Matthew 6:14) and

Debts (*what we have left undone*; Matthew 6:12)

Is it *that* Serious?

We tend to focus on outward *trespasses* (breaking the Law)

Jesus focuses on inward *trespasses* (Matthew 5)

and on *debts* (what we owe; what we never get around to:

e.g., . . . praise, thanks, study, love of neighbor and enemy

. . . the letter we never wrote, the smile we never gave)

God's Two Possible Choices

God has every right to say

"it's not right that I let them off the hook"

But God drops the charges . . . nails them to the cross

(Colossians 2:13-14), And forgives, again and again

c. What for? Not so we can go our own way . . . but

so we can restore/heal our relationship with God and others

"If you do not forgive, neither will God forgive you" (6:14-15)

Not a 'demand' . . . but 'proof' . . .

that we know we need forgiveness as much as anyone else,

and that we're grateful for receiving it

Resources

Two PBS Documentaries

"Forgiveness: A Time to Love And A Time to Hate"

<http://www.pbs.org/programs/forgiveness/>

"The Power of Forgiveness"

www.thepowerofforgiveness.com

"Relationship Repair 101," sermon, NPC, June 24, 2012