

The Art of Forgiveness

Good morning and may God shine His everlasting light on you. I want to talk to you about forgiveness. Forgiveness is sometimes tough to do, especially when we've been hurt, violated, seen others hurt, or feel someone did us wrong.

This was an especially hard decision for me to make in light of what recently happened with the theft of my briefcase. When emotions flare, we see things not through God's eyes, but through a different set of eyes; a not so good set of eyes.

And that was exactly what happened when I realized my briefcase was missing; I started down a dark path. I knew it was dark because there was no light, no guidance. It was one of those times I was so angry I stopped hearing. All I wanted to do was pout.

Faith went out the window, hope went out the window, tomorrow went out the window and the kitchen sink went out the window too.

After several hours of looking for it, another few hours trying putting my sermon together for the next day, after forgetting how wonderful the Broken to Beautiful conference was, how much our church helped with that conference and how much we've helped Gabriel's Corner, I finally settled down.

What a waste of a day and evening. Luckily I have a very understanding wife. Then, once I settled down, I could finally hear God speaking to me and reasonability started setting in. Only then did I have room to hear God speak, room for Him to do His work, and **finally for me to forgive.**

Forgiveness. Hmmmm. I've found forgiveness is not necessarily for the other person. When we forgive, we free ourselves from the bondage of holding onto something that through the emotional prevail will hurt us. The not forgiving part of life.

We all know what that is like. Maybe mom or dad did something we just can't put aside and it keeps eating at us. You might have grown up with child abuse in your family, or maybe you saw violence in your house between mom and dad. Or maybe your spouse did you wrong and you just

can't seem to get rid of that feeling. It just keeps eating at us. Maybe it's not eating at us because they did us wrong, but it is because God tells us to forgive.

As I was going through all these feelings of anger, hurt, retaliation and so on, God jumped in to remind me of some things and **all the sudden it got real**. This is what God said.

Matthew 6:15

But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

If you do not forgive others, neither will your Father in heaven forgive you. Uh Oh! Something to consider when we don't forgive others. What if your heavenly Father does not forgive the sins you've committed because you cannot find it in your heart to forgive others?

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That would not be good. Being the great man of faith I am, God still has to remind me of the words He gives us to remember. And this is very important to know.

Mark 11:25

“And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.

I didn't want to do that....at first. I opened a door and allowed “those” feelings to creep in. It's part of being human. It's part of being alive, but what do we do when we are so angry.

I had to separate myself from the problem so I could breathe. Kind of like Elijah when he was on the run after he had the Baal prophets killed.

He needed time to separate himself from the problem long enough for him to settle down so he could hear what God had to say with that still small voice. I knew I could not hold a grudge and be happy. I realized I needed to do God's work and not be part of man's destruction.

Here at the church we believe first



So I had to decide what to do. God told me, impressed on me, and guided me to let go. He had too much work for me to do to be stopped by a \$200 pc, a \$45 hard drive, and His book. So I let go. It wasn't easy, but I did. Then God went to work.

God sent His angels out, not to look for my briefcase and its contents, but to recover it. Many, many people stepped up all over Council Bluffs. It was so clear that He was at work. Then Ruth got the phone call that my briefcase and its contents were recovered and on the way to my house. God is good, but what about the person who took my briefcase?

They were still out there, so we sought to find them. Not to prosecute them, but to forgive them and love on them. To Build the Relationship because obviously this person needs the Lord.



Although I may have thought they needed jail, God didn't. He knew they needed saving and He knew that's what He has me around for; not to condemn, but to save. But first I had to let go of the hurt so I could move forward to Build the Relationship so we could go that final step and Change Lives.



We have many, many opportunities to change lives but things like lack of hope, not forgiving, holding onto resentment and grudges prevent us from doing God's work. I won't lie to you, it's tough!

Part of testing for my third degree black belt was to write a black belt paper. I talked about what it meant to be a black belt. What I said was up until red belt, we are taught how to fight, maim, protect and destroy. As a black belt I felt it was time to teach, mentor, lead and show people how to heal rather than destroy. That is what I'm saying today.

It's time to heal. It's time to let go of the hurt. It's time to forgive so you can have all the bounty, all the blessings and all the goodness God has to offer. Even in the Lord's prayer we say:

"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Forgive us in the same manner we forgive others.

Matthew 6:15

But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

I don't want to miss my forgiveness and I surely don't want you to miss yours either. I also don't want to see another day of your unhappiness because of your past. Let it GO!! Today is the day to put things down.

Put them behind you, pick up your [standard](#) (a : a long narrow tapering flag that is personal to an individual or corporation and bears heraldic devices).



Israelite Tribal
Standard

Next week is mother's day. If you are holding something against your mother, let it go! Forgive her and go on. Then when those pesky thoughts happen and you want to pick up that garbage again, put it in the waste can, and replace those thoughts with God's word. Don't wait another minute or should I say **don't waste another minute**.

*"If you wish to travel far and fast,
travel light. Take off all your envies,
jealousies, unforgiveness,
selfishness, and fears."*

GLENN CLARK

Reach out for God's blessing. Reach One and Teach One, forgive other's shortcomings.

**This week allow yourself the wisdom,
power, and strength to forgive. In the
same way your Father in heaven will
forgive you.**

Lord,

Lord's Prayer?

Show us where you want us to go and what you want us to do. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who've sinned against us. Show us the way the truth and the life you sent to us for guidance. Give us wisdom to know when and how to forgive, the power to forgive in your name and the strength to forgive. We praise you and today as always, all glory be to you. Thank you for your continued blessing upon this ministry on 8th Avenue. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.