

Kingdom News

Bible Study - Come Let Us Reason Together. (Isaiah 1:18)

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Boot Camp

Christianity 101 - The Basics

Forgiveness

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What is forgiveness? And what do we need to understand about it?

Oh, that's that thing where when someone offends or hurts us, we "let 'em off easy." Right?

You'll recall that the Lord taught us to pray ...forgive us our trespasses (sins or debts); as we forgive those who trespass against us. ⁽¹⁾

According to the dictionary: to **forgive** means:

1. to grant pardon for or remission of (an offense, debt, etc.); absolve.
2. to give up all claim on account of; remit (a debt, obligation, etc.).
3. to grant pardon to (a person).
4. to cease to feel resentment against: *to forgive one's enemies.*
5. to cancel an indebtedness or liability of: *to forgive the interest owed on a loan.*

THE LAW OF FORGIVENESS

When you pray 'forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us... you are invoking a Kingdom law (very similar to the law of sowing and reaping). It has the characteristics of both a logical and of an analogical formula. The "if ... then" and "like ... as" imperatives.

It reads like this

IF/THEN

If I forgive those who sin against me, *then* Father please forgive my sins against You.

LIKE/AS

And in *like* fashion *as* I forgive others, then in this SAME fashion forgive me.

Now the "If...then" or logical formula is clear cut. It is much like an on/off switch. The light is either "on" or it's "off." It's not a little bit "on" and kind of "off." It's off or it's on. There are no shades of gray. If I forgive others, then please forgive me (lights on). If I do not forgive others, then please do not forgive me either (lights off). ⁽²⁾ That's simple, right?

H-O-W-E-V-E-R!!!!

The “like...as” or analogical characteristic of this law is quite different and imposes another set of attributes to the whole forgiveness “thing.” There are many, many ... many shades of gray. And there are many dependent qualities in effect; such that one Person’s behavior is dependent on another person’s behavior.

THE 31 FLAVORS

Let’s back into this....

In the Kingdom there is only one “flavor” of forgiveness. Plan ole’ vanilla. You’re either forgiven, are you aren’t.

Now in this world we have your basic “31 flavors” of forgiveness. You know ...

- Strawberry cheesecake “forgiveness” – we “forgive” because as a Christian, we’re supposed to.
- Rocky road “forgiveness” - we “forgive” but we don’t forget.
- Peaches & crème “forgiveness” – we say that we “forgive” with our mouth; but our heart is still uncommitted.
- Pecan brittle “forgiveness” - we “forgive” but we ex-communicate the offender.
- Peppermint “forgiveness” – we “forgive” but “don’t ever speak to me again and you are so not welcome in my world.”
- Double chocolate, fudge brownie, butternut crunch “forgiveness” – we will eventually, someday, in the not-so-near future, get around to forgiving the offender; just not right now.

Now the “like ... as” principle imposes just this ordinance.

If your “forgiveness” of your neighbor’s offense is a double, chocolate, gooey ... someday after you’ve paid sufficient penance flavor; then the Father’s forgiveness of you is just that.

Remember when you pray, “Father, forgive me “like/as” I forgive my offenders;” you’re invoking a solemn pledge that the Lord is not “permitted” (pardon the expression) to forgive beyond your forgiveness.

In the Kingdom there is only one “flavor” of forgiveness. Plan ole’ vanilla. You’re either forgiven, are you aren’t.

What’s your flavor of “forgiveness?”

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV)

⁽¹⁾ Matthew 6:12; 18:21-22; Luke 11:4

⁽²⁾ Matthew 6:14-15