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Spiritual Disciplines: Relational Forgiveness

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**HANDOUT NOTES**

* **Introduction**

**Forgiveness**: the act of erasing or pardoning debt that is owed. It is to release the debtor from their obligation to pay the debt that they once owed.

**Relational Forgiveness**: a commitment by the wronged to graciously pardon the offender from their liability so that we honor God and our relationships thrive. In some cases, repentance is needed for the sake of true reconciliation. Relational Forgiveness does not mean all consequences are necessarily eliminated.

* **Overlooking an Offense**

**Proverbs 19:11** Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.

**Ecclesiastes 7:21-22** Do not take to heart all the things that people say, lest you hear your servant cursing you. Your heart knows that many times you yourself have cursed others.

* **Forgiving a Debt**

You can’t forgive a debt that is not real.

* **Sinfully, you revenge it**

**Romans 12:17-19** Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”

* **Sinfully, we bury it**

**1 Corinthians 1:10** ...no divisions among you ...

**Hebrews 12:14** (NIV) Make every effort to live in peace with everyone ...

**Matthew 18:15**“If your brother sins against you, *go and tell him his fault*, between you and him alone ...”

**Ephesians 4:3** (NIV) Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace

* **We forgive it**

**Matthew 18:35** “… forgive your brother from your heart.”

**1 Peter 4:8** Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

**Mark 11:25 “**And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”

**Ephesians 4:32** Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

**Colossians 3:12-13** Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

* **By what power do we forgive others?**

**Colossians 3:13b** forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

**Ephesians 4:32b** forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

* **What if they do not deserve it?**

Christ in YOU = the power and the motivation to forgive.

We are to forgive others as God in Christ has forgiven us.

**Ephesians 4:32** Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

* **How do you know that you truly forgave them?**
* **What if they keep sinning against us?**

**Matthew 18:21-22** Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.”

* **What if the person who has sinned against us in a grievous or damaging to the relationship way, doesn’t repent?**

**Matthew 5:44 “**But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you”

**Luke 6:27-28** (NIV) “... Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.”

**Luke 6:35** But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.”

**Romans 12:17-21** Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**Matthew 18:15** “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone.”

**Matthew 18:15-16** “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.”

**Matthew 18:17** “If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”

**Ephesians 4:31** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

**Hebrews 12:15** See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled

**Psalm 73:23-28** Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.

**Romans 8:28** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

**Genesis 50:20** “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good …”

**1 Peter 2:23** When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

**Matthew 11:28-30 “**Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

* + **What if you choose not to forgive?**

Those who choose to not forgive will not be forgiven.

**Matthew 18:23-35**

**Matthew 6:14-15 “**For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”