

25-14, FORGIVENESS, Stumbling Stone #3

PART 1 of 3

Forgiving others, especially without their asking for it, is one of the hardest things that Jesus requires of us. It's a common stumbling stone on the path of life and many Christians get stuck there. I know that very well and so do you.

You would be right if you surmised that if I preached and taught in the straightforward way that I write, I've probably gotten myself in trouble over the years. Declaring the [Luke 9:23-26](#) call to take up our cross daily; or the [Matthew 6:19-33](#) approach to life; or the need for change that [Romans 12:2](#) and [II Corinthians 3:18](#) call for, is not the way to win a popularity contest. I've heard a lot of enthusiastic "Yes, yes!" that lasted until there was a "cross" to bear.

Elaine and I knew the pain of betrayal and rejection by those we served, multiple times, and it hurt deeply. I've had to process that with the Lord in order to come to the wonderful place of freedom that I enjoy today. I have no enemies and there are none whom I would shun fellowship with, but it's been a journey getting there.

IT'S NOT FAIR!

A seemingly unjust thing about forgiveness is that it is often the one who has been violated, who must pay the price of forgiveness. Consider that God was totally innocent in our conflict with Him, yet He paid the full price for our reconciliation! How "fair" was that?



We often begin to rationalize when we read [Matthew 6:14-15](#), "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." That's pretty blunt!

And consider the parable of the ungrateful servant in [Matthew 18:23-35](#), concluding with, "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart." Read it all. Isn't that a life-or-death statement? Is it really that serious? Did Jesus mean what He said there? Yes it is, and yes He did.

Consider also: [Matthew 6:12](#) and 14-15, [Mark 11:25-26](#), [Ephesians 4:32](#), [Colossians 3:13](#), [James 2:13](#), [I John 4:20-21](#).

PART 2, next, KEYS TO FORGIVING

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