



Community of Faith

Hope for Your Home | Week 7

Hope for My Past

GOD WANTS TO ESTABLISH THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN OUR HEARTS

From then on, Jesus began to tell people, “Turn to God and change the way you think and act, because the kingdom of heaven is near!” Matthew 4:17

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN APPEARS AS I SIMPLY RECEIVE JESUS’ GIFT TO ME.

“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he had begun to settle *them*, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. But since he did not have *the means* to repay, his lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment to be made. So the slave fell *to the ground* and prostrated himself before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.’ And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt.” Matthew 18:23-27

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN EXPANDS AS I CHOOSE TO PASS ON THIS GIFT TO EVERYONE ELSE IN MY LIFE.

“But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and *began* to choke *him*, saying, ‘Pay back what you owe.’ So his fellow slave fell *to the ground* and *began* to plead with him, saying, ‘Have patience with me and I will repay you.’ But he was unwilling and went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed. So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened. Then summoning him, his lord *said* to him, ‘You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?’ And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him.” Matthew 18:28-34

“That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart.” Matthew 18:35

WHENEVER SOMEONE WRONGS YOU THERE IS A DEBT IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP; THEY OWE YOU.

“You owe me an apology.”

FORGIVENESS IS NOT FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE OFFENDER.

Do I want to get well or do I want to get even?

In the shadow of your hurt you are justified to hold on to that debt; but in the shadow of the cross, you lose the right to refuse to forgive.

God hasn't asked you to die for somebody; he's asked you to cancel the debt.

Don't continue to allow the people who have hurt you the most to influence your current and future relationships.

Your story explains your behavior; it doesn't excuse it.

WHAT FORGIVENESS ISN'T:

- It isn't minimizing the seriousness of the offense.
- It isn't resuming a relationship without change.
- It isn't forgetting what happened.

To forgive and forget is not possible.

“Their sins and their evildoing I will remember no more.” Hebrew 10:17

HOW DO I FORGIVE?

1. Identify who hurt you
2. Identify what has been taken – what they owe you.
3. Dismiss the case – refuse to hold that debt against them any more.
4. Forgiveness is simply a decision to cancel a debt. It is not a feeling.
5. Remind yourself the case is dismissed as often as necessary.

Huge Biblical truth: Emotion follows motion.

Forgiveness brings the power of the kingdom of Heaven into being in your life circumstances.