

Forgiveness

Matthew 18.21, 22

“A hard on to forget”

During the Nazi occupation of France, a young novice was returning to the convent from the village market. A soldier on his motorcycle saw her and pulled over. Although she initially thought it was to help her with the heavy basket of food, she quickly learned of the conqueror's real motives. As he forced her into the woods, she screamed, but no one heard her.

The trauma that occurred that night haunted her with nightmares for years. But, gradually, with the help of friends, she forgave and was able to forget. Years later, she was chosen to host a meeting of German teachers as a gesture of post-war reconciliation. Among them was her aggressor.

It all came back! The bitterness and the thoughts of revenge were unbearable until she spent the night in prayer. Crying out to God, she eventually found the grace to serve them—all of them. She was finally free!

Reflection

God's forgiveness is free, but it's not cheap. We cannot meditate on the cross without being shocked by the price Jesus paid for our redemption. There was not only the physical pain, there was also the pain of rejection and abandonment. Add to that a crowd of spectators who couldn't have cared less that he was dying for them, and we finally begin to understand how deep his love is. He forgave all of that, and he forgives us of our sin! And because he does, so should we.

That means we must pardon and cease blaming and resenting one another.

Accountability and Application

Until we forgive, we are the prisoner of the person who has offended us. We are caught in an emotional and psychological trap. Whether we want to or not, we meditate on the offender and the offense until our mind is obsessed. And though we might not be aware of it, others may be.

Are you a prisoner of unforgiveness? Do you meditate on an offense over and over?

Can you find it within yourself to let go of past offenses, even though you “deserve” to hang on to them? Jesus did—on the cross!

Prayer: *Almighty God, please forgive my lack of Forgiveness, and guide me through the minefield of my feelings. I want to forgive and forget, but I just can't seem to do it. So, whatever is hindering that process, I ask you to remove it by the power of Christ's blood..and for his glory.*

Matthew 18:21-22 (King James Version)

²¹Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

²²Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.