



# WEEKLY SERMON

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**Sunday** August 28,  
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**Message #6** Forgiveness

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**Text:** Genesis 44, 45, 50; Ephesians 4:31-32

The Story of the Carpenter: Once upon a time, two brothers who lived on adjoining farms fell into conflict. It was the first serious rift in 40 years of farming side-by-side, sharing machinery and trading labor and goods as needed without a hitch. Then everything fell apart. It began with a misunderstanding and it grew into a major difference and finally, it exploded into an exchange of bitter words followed by weeks of silence.

One morning there was a knock-on John's door. He opened it to find a man with a carpenter's toolbox. "I'm looking for a few days' work," he said. "Perhaps you would have a few small jobs here and there I could help with? Could I help you?" "Yes," said the older brother. "I do have a job for you. Look across the creek at that farm. That's my neighbor. In fact, it's my younger brother! Last week there was a meadow between us. He recently took his bulldozer to the river levee and now there is a creek between us. Well, he may have done this to spite me, but I'll do him one better. See that pile of lumber by the barn? I want you to build me a fence an 8-foot fence --so I won't need to see his place or his face anymore."

The carpenter said, "I think I understand the situation. Show me the nails and the post-hole digger and I'll be able to do a job that pleases you." The older brother had to go to town, so he helped the carpenter get the materials ready and then he was off for the day. The carpenter worked hard all that day --measuring, sawing and nailing. About sunset when the farmer returned, the carpenter had just finished his job.

The farmer's eyes opened wide, his jaw dropped. There was no fence there at all. It was a bridge. A bridge that stretched from one side of the creek to the other! A fine piece of work, handrails and all! And the neighbor, his younger brother, was coming toward them, his hand outstretched. "You are quite a fellow to build this bridge after all I've said and done."

The two brothers stood at each end of the bridge, and then they met in middle, taking each other's hand. They turned to see the carpenter hoist his toolbox onto his shoulder. "No, wait! Stay a few days. I've a lot of other projects for you," said the older brother. "I'd love to stay on," the carpenter said, "but I have many more bridges to build."

In **Proverbs 22:6** we read, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." In order for your child or grandchildren to get the most out of Sunday School, parents and grandparents are vital to their Sunday School experience. The Sunday School hour each week is important for their spiritual growth and understanding to put God first in Knowledge and Wisdom. **Consistency is the key in helping them to get the benefit from this first hour on Sunday morning.** This is training them to put Matthew 6:33 into practice, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness..."

- 1. If everything made sense to our understanding, we would need no faith. – Vance Havner**
- 2. Walking by faith means being prepared to trust where we are not permitted to see.**
- 3. The voice of sin is loud, but the voice of forgiveness is louder. – D.L. Moody**
- 4. Government's first duty is to protect the people, not run their lives. – Ronald Regan**

In His Amazing Grace – *Pastor David Miklas*

# "Forgiveness – Seventy times Seven – Part VI"

**INTRODUCTION:** Would you please follow as I read Matthew 18:21-35,

“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? (22) Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. (23) Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. (24) And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. (25) But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. (26) The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. (27) Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. (28) But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. (29) And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. (30) And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. (31) So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. (32) Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: (33) Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? (34) And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. (35) So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.”

In our story from Matthew 18 Peter came to Jesus and asked, "... how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" Then Peter immediately gives Jesus what Peter thinks the answer may be. He said, "If my brother sins against me seven times, should I forgive him?" Then Jesus not only tells Peter, "Your answer of seven is wrong." He said, "Let me give you the right answer." "... but, until seventy times seven." That is **Four hundred ninety times!**

If you have a pen go all the way in front of your Bible on one of those blank pages write the number **490** and circle it. **That, to me, is a big, important number** to Jesus instructed us to forgive, "**Seventy times seven translates into 490 times.**" What does that mean?

**Jesus was saying that you need to forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive, and you are going to have to learn how to forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive. Married people understand what I mean.** And forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive. **That's what the Scripture says.** And forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive. **We are nowhere near close to home yet, not at all. We are to forgive and keep on forgiving.** Jesus is teaching us that forgiveness is an unending process.

You notice Peter's question was in regard to forgiving one person. He says "If my brother sins against me..." That's singular. The reason this is an issue to us is because Jesus' answer to forgive 490 times applies to one person. I am to **forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive** even that one person.

In Mark 11:25-26 we read, "**And when ye stand praying forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.**"

God said, "Wait, I'll forgive you, when you come to your senses and you forgive the people that you had a problem with."

I'm probably talking to some people, who've asked God to forgive them. I'm wondering if He really forgave you for what you did, because you held within your heart bitterness and hatred toward somebody else.

You walked away thinking, "**Hey, everything is just find between me and God.**" However, God said, "**You are in the same condition now, that you were before you prayed, because I have no obligation to forgive you, when you don't want to forgive other people. Why is it you want to receive forgiveness, but you do not want to give it?**"

**If forgiveness is good for you, it is also good for others, too.**

In a church like ours, we see one another's weaknesses and faults more than you realize. We make our mistakes in the presence of one another. If we, as individuals, do not constantly cleanse ourselves, we are going to be dirty with a lack of forgiveness.

**We must** constantly cleanse ourselves from the desire for revenge.

**We must** constantly cleanse ourselves from that thing called bitterness that can creep into any life.

**We must** constantly cleanse ourselves from hurt feelings and pride and critical mouths and critical minds and critical hearts.

**We must** be careful, that we are not so judgmental that we destroy one another like a bunch of animals over a piece of raw meat.

We've got to learn to **forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive**. That's the only way you are going to make it. I'm not talking about your neighbor; I'm talking about you. You will not make it until you can learn to **forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive**. **Four hundred ninety times** was Jesus' suggestion. That shouldn't be hard for us to remember today.

I'm not talking about when you get mad wrongfully. I'm talking about when you are mad rightly. "What do I mean?"

I'm talking about when someone does something unintentional, we are to forgive them.

I'm talking about when somebody purposely and knowingly does something to hurt you. That's when it's hard to forgive. It's easy to forgive when you find out that you were wrong about them.

We always take the path of least resistance spiritually, don't we? "**I'll forgive. I understand. I really didn't see it right.**" What if you did see it right? That's when forgiveness distinguishes the professionals from the amateurs. If you are faithful to this church Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night, eventually you are going to be offended. I'm not saying there is a possibility. It's a certainty. You will be hurt. You will be offended. Someone will mistreat you.

Why? Because imperfect humans are dealing with imperfect humans on an imperfect earth. May I remind you that we are a bunch of sinful people? So sinful, Jesus said, "**You need to be consciously aware of the need to forgive that same person 490 times.**"

We are sinful. We are weak. We all do things that frustrate others. Everybody here will mistreat somebody else here.

The Apostle Paul warns us in Ephesians 4:31 that bitterness and anger are deadly sins of an unforgiving spirit, "**Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour (on the war path over some issue), and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.**"

Remember, "**An unforgiving spirit is the Devil's playground, and before long it becomes the Christian's battleground.**"

We need to learn to forgive and forgive and forgive.

**Forgive, don't hate.**

**Forgive, don't seek revenge and strike back.**

**Forgive, don't become bitter and try to destroy someone.**

**Forgive, don't become the avoider of everybody.**

**Forgive, don't let it fester, run or hide.**

**Forgive, don't attack and back stab.  
Forgive, don't sin by not forgiving.**

The recoil of your bitterness and your revenge could break you. You shoot to blow somebody away, but you'd better get ready. There is going to be a price to pay.

**In hatred, everybody loses.  
No forgiveness, no victory.**

**A lack of forgiveness contributes to high blood pressure, nervous breakdowns, ulcers, indigestion.**

**A lack of forgiveness will produce depression, panic, insecurity, and sleeplessness.**

All that stuff will get inside you.

**If God, who is perfect**, can forgive the drunkard, why can't you who are imperfect forgive each other?

**If God, who is perfect**, can forgive the murderer, why can't imperfect people forgive imperfect people?

**If God, who is perfect**, can forgive the prostitute, why can't you and I, imperfect people, forgive imperfect people?

**If God, who is perfect**, can forgive the atheist, why can't you and I, imperfect people, forgive imperfect people?

We are not to forgive until we are tired of forgiving; we are to **forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive**, because it is good for the object, not just because it is good for you.

Some of you need to develop your own spiritual character so that you can consistently and persistently forgive and forgive and forgive.

**Long term** relationships between children and their parents, bosses and their employees, and Christians among Christians have a habit of forgiving.

**Long term** church members have a habit of forgiving.

**Long term** marriages have a habit of forgiving.

**First: To forgive seventy times seven, we have to realize what forgiveness truly is.**

In Ephesians 4:32 we read, "**And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, FORGIVING one another, even as God for Christ's sake, hath FORGIVEN you.**"

Paul expressed that it's characteristic of saints to forgive. We, who have been forgiven by God, should we not also forgive others? But we shout "I have a **RIGHT to be angry. I have a RIGHT not to forgive.**" You don't have that RIGHT, "**An unforgiving Christian is a CONTRADICTION TO THE GRACE OF GOD.**" Thank God:

**He forgives every KIND of sin.**

**He forgives every TIME we sin.**

**He forgives the very MOMENT we ask for forgiveness.**

**He forgives sin FOREVER, He never brings it up again.**

Here is our definition for forgiveness:

**"Forgiveness is a choice, to reconcile with an offender by erasing their debt and agreeing to live with the consequences of their sin."**

**Forgiveness is a choice.** You chose to or not to forgive.

**Forgiveness is a concern** "to reconcile with our offender."

**Forgiveness has a cost.** Forgiveness comes with a price tag.

**Forgiveness has a consequence.** You must agree to live with the consequences of that person's sin.

**Forgiveness** includes you paying the price for the evil that someone else has brought upon you.  
**Forgiveness** is accepting undeserved suffering.

**Forgiveness** is vicarious substitutionary suffering for the sin of somebody else. Somebody else wronged you and you accept it and suffered because of it. You still forgave.

If you don't believe this is possible, look at Calvary. Look what they did to Jesus Christ, the King of kings, the perfect, sinless, flawless Son of God.

**They** ran Him through six trials. Was He guilty? No. Had He done anything wrong? No. Had He sinned? No.

**They** scourged Him. They beat Him. Had He done anything wrong? No. Had He hurt anybody? No. Had He sinned? No.

**They** took a spear and shoved it in His side. They nailed Him to a cross. Had He done anything wrong? No. Had He hurt them? No. Had He ever sinned against anyone? No. Had He ever abused anyone? No.

As they were driving the nails in His hands and in His feet in Luke 23:34 the Jesus said over and over again, "**Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do....**" There was perfection forgiving imperfection and suffering a penalty that He didn't even deserve. That's what forgiveness is.

You hurt yourself by not forgiving, more than you hurt the unforgiving one.

It shows on your face and in your attitude.

It shows in your relationship. You are not happy.

It shows in your singing, or lack thereof. You don't smile.

It shows in your health.

It shows in your lack of productivity for God.

The Bible tells us in Romans 12:19, " ... **Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.**" I don't know if it has occurred to you lately, but you're not God. God said, "**You leave vengeance to Me.**" What are we supposed to do? **Forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive.**

**SECOND: To forgive seventy times seven, we must realize that God's forgiveness is our example.** If you are having a challenging time forgiving someone, why don't you sit down, take a piece of paper, start listing all the sins for which God has forgiven you?

Not only is it going to be a tough assignment, but it will require a lot of paper. And when you are finished with one ream of paper He'll hand you another ream of paper. Then maybe you will begin to realize that God **forgives and forgives and forgives. He forgives the past, forgives the present, forgives the future, and forgives and forgives and forgives.** Some of you ought to thank God for His forgiveness.

You say, "**But they have repetitively...**" Oh, so it bothers you when somebody repetitively does something against you. Check your list and realize that God is still dealing with your repetitive sins against Him.

Think about it. Inquire within thyself. What are you still dealing with, the same besetting sin that you dealt with last year.

**THIRD: To forgive seventy times seven, we must realize that people are broken.** If you want to learn to forgive and to forgive, and if you want to last in your marriage, if you want to last in the church, if you want to last around the human race, you are going to have to realize that those that would hurt you, it is possible that they might be broken.

You are uncomfortable with them, because something about them is broken. But, don't forget, you are broken also. You may be broken in the same area, and you don't even know it. If you won't forgive, you are broken in the area of forgiveness.

To forgive **seventy times seven**, we must be sensitive to the burdens that other people carry.

Think of the load that they carry. Stop and think of how much pressure the person that hurt you is under. Stop and pray for their great responsibility, and realize that maybe they didn't intentionally hurt you, but they broke under pressure.

Let me ask you. Have you ever broken under pressure? Have you ever done what you shouldn't have done?

Let me ask every parent here. Have you ever broken under pressure, and behaved in a way toward your child that you shouldn't have behaved?

To forgive **seventy times seven**, you are going to have to forgive the way you would want to be forgiven. Forgive as you want to be forgiven. Forgive as you want Jesus to forgive you.

**Do you** want people to **HATE** you and not forgive you? **Then** forgive the way you would want to be forgiven.

**Do you** want people to **SEEK** revenge against you and not forgive you? Then forgive like you would want to be forgiven.

**Do you** want people to be **BITTER** with you and not forgive you? If not, forgive like you would want to be forgiven.

**Do you** want people to be **UNREASONABLE** with you and not forgive you? Then forgive the way you want to be forgiven.

**Do you** want people to **AVOID** you and not forgive you? If not, then forgive the way you would want to be forgiven.

Seventy times seven means to **forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive.**

**No church stays healthy without forgiveness offered seventy times seven.**

**Twelve times is not enough.**

**Twenty four times is not enough.**

**Forty times is not enough.**

**Ninety times is not enough.**

**One hundred ninety times is not enough.**

You are going to have to forgive and forgive and forgive.

**This truth will preserve churches.**

**This truth will preserve in you a right spirit and a right attitude.**

**This truth will preserve your marriage.**

**This truth will preserve your relationship with your children.**

**This truth will preserve your health.**

**Maybe**, there is somebody here right now that won't forgive another person. Nobody is aware because you say you have, but inside your heart you have not. It's eating at you and eating at you. You have become **bitter** and **cynical** and **vindictive** about the issue.

Do you know what? Right now you feel like that is okay. But, I want to warn you. Right now your marriage is strong and you have a healthy relationship with your kids. Let me tell you what you are going to experience in your life.

One of these days, you are going to be coming to my office, saying, "**S/he won't come back to me. S/he won't have anything to do with me.**" Or, "**My child won't talk to me.**"

You may have to trace it back to this sermon where I told you, "**Forgive now, so someday you don't reap what you have sown.**"

Someday, your unreasonableness is going to come back to you. Some of you are risking your own children because of the bitterness that you have down inside you. The Bible says in Galatians 6:7, "**Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.**"

Remember "**Forgiveness is a CHOICE, a choice to reconcile with an offender by erasing their debt and agreeing to live with the consequences of their sin.**"

**Maybe**, your words have embittered another and there is a wall of division against a brother in Christ or a family member. Why not agree to "**forgive one another just as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you.**"

**Maybe**, you need to pray, "**Lord I need you to protect my heart from becoming bitter and living with a resentful unforgiving Spirit. Please help me to maintain a loving spirit between me and them, and me and you.**"

This week, put into practice Ephesians 4:32, "**And be ye KIND one to another, TENDERHEARTED, forgiving one another.**"

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If God has spoken to your heart after reading the sermon "**Forgiveness – Seventy times Seven – Part IV**" then right now talk to God about what He has spoken to you.

Do you have the assurance that one day you will go to heaven? If you have no assurance that you know Jesus Christ, then I trust you will decide to accept Him as your personal Savior. The Bible tells us in

Acts 16:31, "**...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...**"

Romans 10:13, "**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**"

This prayer is here for those who need to ask Jesus to be their personal Savior: "**I do want to go to Heaven. I know I am a sinner, and I do believe Jesus Christ died for me. I realize I cannot buy this great salvation, nor can I earn it. Knowing Jesus died on the cross and arose from the grave to pay my sin debt and to purchase my salvation, I do now trust Him as my Savior, and from this moment on I am completely depending on Him for my salvation.**"

If you made the decision to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, please let me know. Please send an e-mail to [pastormiklas@aol.com](mailto:pastormiklas@aol.com) and I will send you some literature that will help you in your Christian life.

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