

Collateral Damage
Forgiveness Series #1
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mmatevich@aol.com

Intro:

- * When it comes to today's subject- the real "F" word **forgiveness**... many people struggle.
 - Many have leashed up **ANGER, RESENTMENT, & UNFORGIVENESS.**
 - We don't really realize it but we are dragging this bench around & **it is causing serious COLLATERAL DAMAGE- in our Relationships, our self, most importantly it is smashing up the POTENTIAL you have for God in this one & only life!**
- * I have discovered something @ the "F" word- unleashing it is **unnatural**...
 - When someone hurts me... says something against me... I like to hold a grudge- I want to get them back.
 - Someone tells me I should forgive them but I don't want to release them.
 - Forgiveness flies in the face of every instinct have.
- * **I want you to think - "who" is sitting on your bench?**
 - * Could it be and **ex-spouse, parent, coach...** ex-business partner... a fellow student

NOTE: When we harbor unforgiveness... you are saying, "**You control my life.**"
You hurt me you have the controls of my life.

1. Jesus had been talking about the Real "F" word...**Mt. 18:21-22**

***** Forgiveness is more about the *one who has been offended* than about the one who offended.**

- * Simon Peter didn't get it so Jesus explains by launching into one of his classic stories...
Jesus the classic story teller- bible times rarely ever taught without telling stories.

Mt 18:23-35 A classic story about forgiveness.

Mt 18:32-34

Irony- the King had delivered the servant from prison BUT the servant put himself in prison.

***** The same is true in your life & mine.**

- (1) We have been delivered, set free, forgiven (if saved) the debt has been taken care of...
If we harbor unforgiveness we put ourselves back in PRISON.
- (2) Back in the condition we were in before we understood forgiveness!

- * **I think we have all been there- haven't we?** We have received forgiveness but to experience it?
- * **When we practice forgiveness we are MOST like God!** Because that is "who" God is.

2. Jesus deals with Peter once again Mt 18:22 not 7 times but 70x7=490 (Needs to be a habit)

- * **"For-GIVE-ness** - "give is in the word! We are giving ourselves a gift.

- * The "Lord's" prayer- talks about forgiveness...
 - One of the statements is "confession"- we are to confess to the Father.
I love that I can do that.

Mt. 6:12 "And forgive us our debts, **as** we forgive our debtors."

- * **We have been taught to easily confess our sins (generally) then walk away.**
- * **(v12b "AS" ... I want quick forgiveness, so do I give quick forgiveness?)**

Lk 11:4 "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one **that is indebted to us.** And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."

- * People like to HOLD onto unforgiveness because it gives us a rush, sense of power.
- * A. God says I want you to do something that is Unnatural.
- B. **Self- certain barriers that keep the people on our BENCH... from experiencing forgiveness**

1. **Self-deception barrier**- we rationalize, tell ourselves rational lies...
2. **Self-defense barrier**- our favorite,

* Forgiveness is a GREAT act of FAITH.

Romans 12:19 "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* **give place** unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

3. Self-image barrier-

NOTE: We are at our strongest when we admit to God & other the obvious.
We are in a great position when we say- "debt cancelled."

4. Self-protection barrier-

* But don't let it stop you from experiencing all the greatness of God & experience forgiveness.

Conclusion:

- * This is the picture of what God wants to do in this series---
 1. To see the names of the people on your bench.
 2. To show how to release them and for Him to lead you to safety.
- * So you and I can be ALL that the Master wants us to for His kingdom.