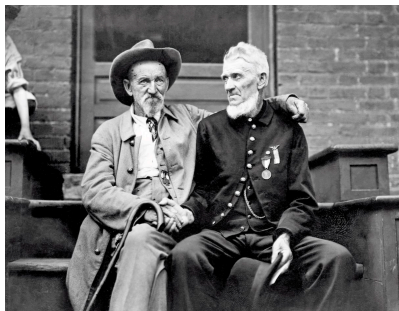


Spiritual Resolutions: Forgiving

Job 21:23-25 ❖ Matthew 18:21-35



Civil War veterans at a reunion, Gettysburg, PA, 1913

Spiritual Resolutions

Have you made any New Year's resolutions?

What are the top five New Year's resolutions?

On the four Sundays in January, let's ask God to help us resolve: to be more **forgiving**, to **pray** more, to study the **Bible** more, and to truly **love** our neighbors.

Debts and Debtors

Each and every one of us has been **wounded**.

Each and every one of us has **wounded** others.

"Our relationships with **others** and with **God** are forever being **breached**, and forgiveness is needed for their healing and restoration." ("A Christian Primer," Al Winn, 63)

How we deal with those **injuries** is important to God.

Why is "debts" (Matthew 6:12) the perfect metaphor for sins?

Forgiving or not forgiving people affects both our spiritual and our physical **health**. (Job 21:23-25)

The Arithmetic of Forgiveness

How many times has God forgiven you and me for the same sin?

The disciple Peter spoke for all of us when he asked Jesus, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins **against** me? Up to **seven** times?" (Matthew 18:21)

What answer did Jesus give?

The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

The King is **God**, who has **mercy** on us and cancels our **debt**. Since the King had forgiven a debt worth **millions** of dollars, he in turn expected the man to forgive a debt worth **thousands**.

The **amount** of the debt has no bearing on whether or not we are expected to forgive!

Being **tortured** is the result of not forgiving. (Mt 18:34)

Forgiving others is not a requirement for being a Christian, but it is **evidence** of being a Christian.

Takeaway

Forgiveness is both a **gift** from God and a **command** from God.

We are most like Jesus when we **forgive**.

What are some practical steps to take to be more forgiving?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

"More about Jesus would I know,
More of His grace to **others** show,
More of His saving fulness see,
More of His love who **died** for me."

(Presbyterian Sunday school teacher, Eliza E. Hewitt, 1887)