

# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

**Ephesians 4:30-32**

**Lesson #25**

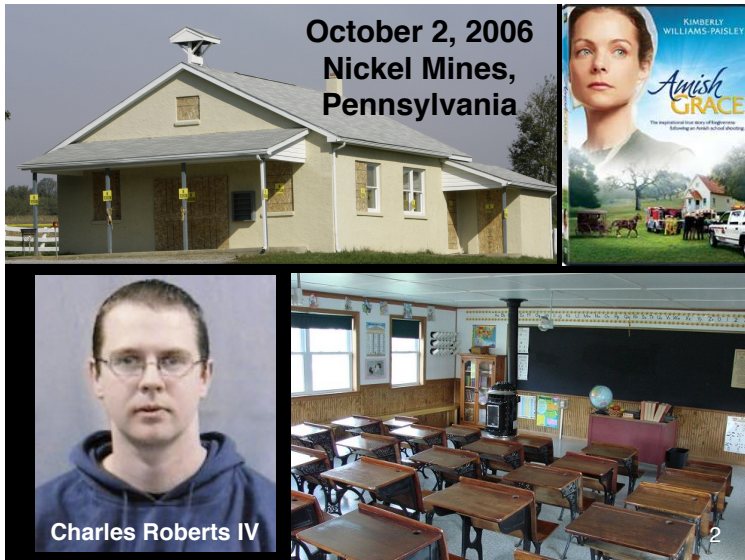
**Anger and Forgiveness**

**01/21/2017**

## You might have an unforgiving spirit if -

- There are individuals that you can not pray that God would save or bless until they treated you justly.
- There are individuals whose "penitence" are unacceptable until you stop hurting.
- You keep score of how others respond to you and bless or curse accordingly.
- You have a hard time letting go of what others have done to you or your friends.
- You have a loving relationship only with those who have not treated you poorly.
- You often feel sorry for yourself.

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## Why is "forgiveness" such a big issues in the New Testament?

1. It is the heart of the

**GOSPEL  
MESSAGE.**

2. It is essential for

**CHRISTIAN  
COMMUNITY.**

3. It is the key to

**PERSONAL  
PEACE.**



3

## Matthew 18

- **The previous paragraph** instructed God's people to restore those who had sinned against them.

"<sup>21</sup> Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"

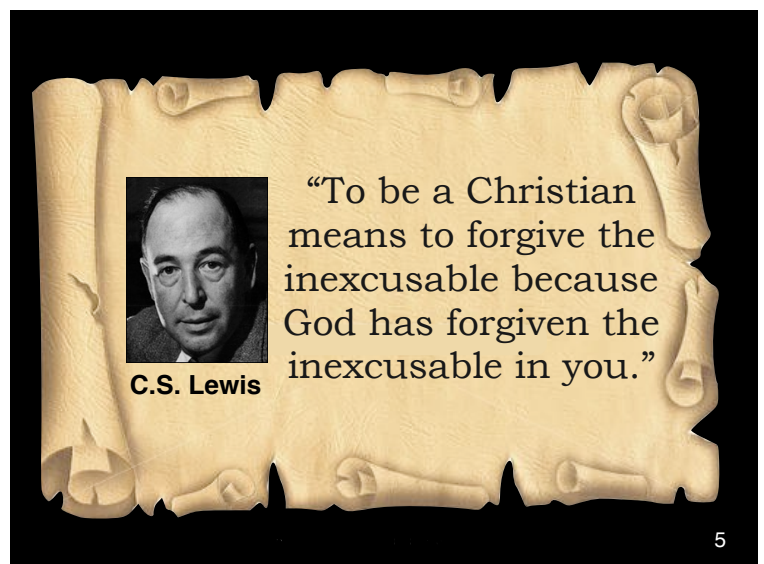
- **An obvious question** - What do you do when a person keeps repeating sinful behavior.

<sup>22</sup> Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven."

### Luke 17

"<sup>3</sup> Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and **if he repents**, forgive him. <sup>4</sup> And if he sins against you seven times a day, and returns to you seven times, **saying, 'I repent,**' forgive him."

4



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### Jesus illustrates

<sup>23</sup> For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a certain king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup> And when he had begun to settle them, there was brought to him one who owed him ten thousand talents (\$14,000,000,000). <sup>25</sup> 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. <sup>26</sup> The slave therefore falling down, prostrated himself before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will repay you everything.' <sup>27</sup> And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt."

- **A penitent debtor asks for mercy.**
- **The King sets him free without justice.**
- **The King personally absorbs the loss.**

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"<sup>28</sup> But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii (\$10,000); and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, 'Pay back what you owe.' <sup>29</sup> So his fellow slave fell down and began to entreat him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you.' <sup>30</sup> He was unwilling however, but went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed. <sup>31</sup> So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened. <sup>32</sup> Then summoning him, his lord said to him, 'You wicked slave, **I forgave you all that debt because you entreated me.** <sup>33</sup> **Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you?**' <sup>34</sup> And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him."

7

"<sup>35</sup> So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."

- **Some believe - God has two conditions for forgiveness:**
  - ✓ **Repentance** - Turning from sin to God.
  - ✓ **Social reciprocation** - Forgiving others.
- **Implications** - God's forgiveness is not just about theology but also about ethics.
- **"The torturers"** - Who are they - God or fellow men (society)?
- **A similar idea may be seen in** - Luke 6:37-38

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### Luke 6

"<sup>37</sup> And do not judge and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned. <sup>38</sup> Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

- This passage is often **wrongly understood** to refer to the way God will respond to us if we give money, etc. to God's work.
- It's more likely that this passage refers to **human social dynamics**. The way we treat others is the way they will treat us.

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### Matthew 6

"<sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, **as we also have forgiven our debtors.**"

"<sup>14</sup> For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. <sup>15</sup> **But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.**"

- **Here, forgiveness is clearly conditioned** on our forgiving others.
- **The point of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt.5-7) is NOT THE GRACE OF GOD** but rather the correction of a superficial view of the Law of Moses.

*Matt.5:21-22 is another example.*

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### Matthew 5

"<sup>21</sup> You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit murder' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell."

- **The role of the Law** is to shut all up "under sin" (Rom.5:20, 7:13) leaving us to hunger and thirst for a righteousness that we do not have (Matt.5:6) until we embrace the Gospel of the Cross (Rom.8:3).

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#### *Ephesians 4*

"26 Be angry, and yet do not sin; **do not let the sun go down on your anger**, 27 and do not **give the devil an opportunity**. . . .

30 And do not **grieve the Holy Spirit** of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 And **be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other**, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."

**We give the devil an opportunity  
and grieve the Holy Spirit when we:**

1. **Fail to let anger give us insight.**
2. **Fail to forgive & forbear with others.**
3. **Fail to repent (seek forgiveness).**

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#### *Colossians 3*

"12 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, **and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.** 14 **And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.**"

#### *1 Peter 3*

"8 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; 9 **not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead;** for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing."

**Next week**

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### **Forgiveness has a lot to do with:**

- 1) how we evaluate **anger**.



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## **ANGER**



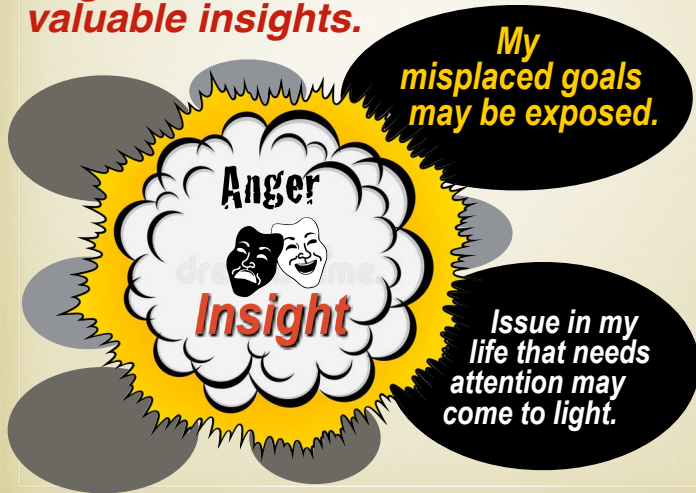
**comes from  
frustrated  
expectations**



Expectations come from  
our perspective (our worldview)  
and priorities (sense of need).

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### **Anger can lead to valuable insights.**



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### **Forgiveness has a lot to do with:**

- 1) how we evaluate **anger**.
- 2) how we embrace **grace**.



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**Forgiveness has a lot to do with:**

- 1) how we evaluate **anger**.
- 2) how we embrace **grace**.
- 3) how we endure **loss**.
- 4) how we express **repentance**.
- 5) how we experience **empathy**.

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**Obstacles to forgiveness**

- **Personal Pain** - Inability or unwillingness to see beyond the personal pain we feel.
- **Demanding justice** - Refusing to close the account and accept the loss of temporal justice for our "rightful cause".
- **Lack of empathy** - Forgetting what it is like to be forgiven.
- **Playing the victim card** - Refusing to claim the freedom (power) to forgive.  
"I have a stronghold of an 'unforgiving spirit' that I am powerless to remove."

20

Corrie ten Boom

"Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function regardless of the temperature of the heart."

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**What can we learn from this?**

- **This is a big issue** - Forgiveness is a very, very, important part of our calling and it is a big problem for most people.
- **To forgive we must give up two things** -  
1. Temporal justice for our rightful claim.  
2. The loss of a debt owed us.
- **Gratitude for God's grace** - When we really "get it" with respect to grace, we forgive.
- **Empathy is a key** - If we struggle with forgiving it starts with a lack of empathy.

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