

Today's Message

What If I Really Believed in Total Forgiveness?

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August 9, 2009

Introduction:

God's total forgiveness of me through the cross of Christ.

My total forgiveness of myself through the cross of Christ.

My total forgiveness of those who have sinned against me through the cross of Christ.

Ephesians 4:29-32 – Our relationship to the Holy Spirit is at stake.

Matthew 6:9-19 – Our relationship to the Father is at stake.

Matthew 18:21, 22, 35

Forgiveness is at the heart of the Gospel, at the heart of our relationship with God and with one another.

R.T. Kendall's book, ***Total Forgiveness***. "R.T., you must totally forgive them."

Copies of *Total Forgiveness*, by R.T. Kendall, recommended by Dr. Kirk are available in the lobby after first and second service today. Cost: \$8 (our cost).

I will focus on our total forgiveness of those who have hurt us and/or sinned against us. We are called to total forgiveness.

If we know we have been totally forgiven we can forgive ourselves.

If we have been able to totally forgive ourselves we can forgive others.

But how can we know that we have totally forgiven someone?

The example of Joseph forgiving his brothers provides us hints of what total forgiveness looks like because he totally forgave them for intending to kill him and later selling him into slavery.

1 – If we have totally forgiven someone we will not want other people to know what they did to us or said about us. Genesis 45:1

2 – If we have totally forgiven someone we will not want them to be afraid of us or intimidated by us. Genesis 45:2-5a

- 3 – If we have totally forgiven someone we will want them to forgive themselves and not feel guilty about it. Genesis 45:5-8
- 4 – If we have totally forgiven someone we will want to help them save face. Genesis 45:8
- 5 – If we have totally forgiven someone we will help protect them from their greatest fears. Genesis 45:9-10, Genesis 50:17-21
- 6 – If we have totally forgiven someone we will not only forgive them initially but we will continually forgive them for a lifetime.
Genesis 45:9-10, 50:17-21
- 7 – If we have totally forgiven someone we will pray for them and seek God's blessing on them.
Matthew 5:43-45

Conclusion: "R.T., you must totally forgive them. Until you totally forgive them you will be in chains. Release them, and you will be released." Josif Tson of Romania

"Are you forgiving totally, completely, utterly, absolutely, unconditionally, entirely, wholly? That is how Jesus forgives sinners and He expects no less from us. More than that, He makes it the foundation of our prayer life: "If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matthew 6:15 James Kennedy