

SERMON SERIES *from* NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

— ANDY ANDREWS —

The
TRAVELER'S GIFT



Seven DECISIONS THAT DETERMINE
PERSONAL SUCCESS

by JAN *and* RICK LOY

SERMON

VI

THE COMPASSIONATE *DECISION*:

“I WILL GREET THIS DAY
WITH A FORGIVING SPIRIT”

“Forgiveness is a secret that is hidden in plain sight. It costs nothing and is worth millions. It is available to everyone and used by few. If you harness the power of forgiveness, you will be sought after and regarded highly. And not coincidentally, you will also be forgiven by others!”

—Abraham Lincoln in *THE TRAVELER’S GIFT*

ADAPTED FROM *The TRAVELER’S GIFT*, by ANDY ANDREWS



“Forgiveness unleashes joy. It brings peace. It washes the slate clean. It sets all the highest values of love in motion. In a sense, forgiveness is Christianity at its highest level.”

—John MacArthur

THE POWER OF GOD’S FORGIVENESS
COLOSSIANS 2:13-14; MATTHEW 6:14-15; COLOSSIANS 3:12-13

When our hearts are set free by God’s gift of forgiveness, we are able to forgive others as we have been forgiven. The Holy Spirit in us is our source for forgiving others. We do not generate forgiveness for others from our own nature; it is a God-given freedom that we pass along to others. We do this in grateful obedience to God as a testimony to others of God’s free gift of grace. The ability to greet the day with a forgiving spirit is a result of understanding and appreciating how God has forgiven us in Christ.

Three realities concerning the power of God’s forgiveness in and through us are the focal points of this message. They are in rank order, each one flowing from the previous.

- The Power of God’s Forgiveness is...
 1. The Pathway to the right relationship with God eternally
– Colossians 2:13-14
 2. The Requisite to full fellowship with God daily – Matthew 6:14-15

3. The Vehicle to peace with others daily – Colossians 3:12-13

- The Pathway to Right Relationship with God – Colossians 2:13-14

- Sin separated us from relationship with God; we chose rebellion against God, disobedience of His law, and waywardness of heart and affections.

1. By birth, we all inherited the Adamic nature – Romans 5:12-13

2. By choice, each of us choose rebellion – Romans 3:10-18

- We could not make ourselves acceptable to God; we needed a Savior/Redeemer to pay our debt and give us new life.

1. We were dead spiritually, lost and without hope – Luke 19:10

2. “The Son of God became the Son of Man that the sons of man might become the sons of God.” —John 3:16; Romans 5:6-8; Ephesians 2:4-16

- When we submit/surrender to Christ as Lord and Savior, God forgives our debt to Him, and the Spirit of God takes up permanent residence in us.

1. God’s forgiveness means that He has made provision for the debt which we owed Him and the transgressions we had committed against Him. God satisfied both His justice and His love in the transaction that occurred on Calvary when Jesus was crucified.

2. Jesus paid a debt He did not owe; we owed a debt we could not pay; He took our place – Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 2:13-14

3. As His children, He is in us, with us, and has placed His seal upon us – John 14:16-18; Ephesians 1:13

4. As believers we now live in the freedom of right relationship with God; He has justified us, loving and working in us “just as if we had never sinned” – Romans 5:1-2

- Supporting texts and quotes on this truth:

“Forgiveness is the remission of sins. For it is by this that what has been lost, and was found, is saved from being lost again.” —Augustine

“Peace comes when there is no cloud between us and God. Peace is the consequence of forgiveness, God’s removal of that which obscures His face and so breaks union with Him.” —Charles H. Brent

“Our love for God and our appreciation of His love and forgiveness will be in proportion to the recognition of our sin and unworthiness.” —Dave Hunt

“There’s no sight like seeing the light from Calvary kiss a human face as it fills the heart with the assurance of Divine forgiveness.” —Gipsy Smith

“The assurance of His total forgiveness of our sins through the blood of Christ means we don’t have to play defensive games anymore. We don’t have to rationalize and excuse our sins. We can call sin exactly what it is, regardless of how ugly and shameful it may be, because we know that Jesus bore that sin in His body on the cross.”

—Jerry Bridges

THE POWER OF GOD’S FORGIVENESS IS...
FIRST, THE PATHWAY TO RIGHT RELATIONSHIP
WITH GOD ETERNALLY – COLOSSIANS 2:13-14

The Requisite to Right Fellowship With God Daily – Matthew 6:14-15

In Matthew 6:9-15, Jesus gives the model prayer for God’s children.

- In verses 11-13 Jesus addresses our daily needs:
 1. Daily bread – provision and sustenance
 2. Forgiveness like that which we give to others
 3. God’s protection that we not be easy targets for temptation or the enemy
- In verses 14-15 Jesus amplifies forgiving others as a requisite to enjoying the fullness of fellowship with the Father.

1. The salvation of God in Christ is sufficient for the forgiveness of all our sin and the establishment of our relationship with God eternally.
2. Since we have been forgiven of the most horrific offenses possible (which necessitated the crucifixion of the Savior) - we are compelled to forgive others without qualification.
 - a) It is grateful obedience to God as our Father.
 - b) It is reflective of God's heart and kindness to us.
 - c) It is a starting point for God using us fully in ministry.
3. As we forgive (Matthew 10:8), we please God and He can bless/use us.
4. If we do not forgive, we grieve God's Spirit and hamper our daily fellowship with God; we are His children but are living in rebellion.

Supporting texts and quotes on this truth:

Matthew 5:23-24; Matthew 18:23-35; Ephesians 4:30-32; I Peter 3:8-9; James 3:8-12; I John 2:3-11

"The person who is living by grace sees this vast contrast between his own sins against God and the offenses of others against him. He forgives others because he himself has been so graciously forgiven. He realizes that, by receiving God's forgiveness through Christ, he has forfeited the right to be offended when others hurt him."

—Jerry Bridges

"If you're a follower of Jesus but you feel distant from him during this era of your life, if you're having difficulty resting easy in his forgiveness, could it be because you're blatantly refusing to let go of your animosity toward another person?"

—Lee Strobel

"We forgive freely or we do not really forgive at all." —Lewis B. Smedes

"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover the prisoner was you."

—Philip Yancey

"I firmly believe a great many prayers are not answered because we are not willing to forgive someone." —D. L. Moody

THE POWER OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS IS...

FIRST, THE PATHWAY TO RIGHT
RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD ETERNALLY
– COLOSSIANS 2:13-14

SECOND, THE REQUISITE TO RIGHT
FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD DAILY
– MATTHEW 6:14-15

The Vehicle to peace with others daily – Colossians 3:12-13

- Believers are compelled and commanded to be forgiving.
 1. It is evidence we have experienced forgiveness – Matthew 18:21-35
 2. It is evidence we are abiding in Jesus – John 13:34-35
 3. It is evidence we are becoming more like Jesus
– Philippians 2:1-8; Luke 7:47

- We forgive as Jesus forgave.
 1. We initiate forgiving; we do not wait to be asked – Mark 11:25
 2. We choose to forgive, not waiting on feelings or circumstances
– Mark 11:25
 3. We extend forgiveness without limitation – Luke 17:3-4; Mark 11:25
 4. We never retaliate for offense; we forgive – Romans 12:14-17; 19-21

 5. We do everything within our ability to be at peace with all – Romans 12:18
 - a) We extend forgiveness and cancel all “debts.”
 - b) We are wise in the stewardship of ongoing relationships.

“Forgiveness is about the past; trust is about the future.”

—Andy Andrews

- We affirm daily God's forgiveness for us in Christ.
 1. Our debts are cancelled; we are sons/daughters of God with all rights and privileges.

2. We did and do sin, yet God loves and works in us to make us more like Christ.

3. There is nothing we could ever do to make God love us more, or less; His love for each of us is perfect and removes fear, dread, or anxiety
—I John 4:18

Supporting texts and quotes on this truth:

1. Luke 6:31; Romans 12:3-5; I Corinthians 13:1-3; Hebrews 12:15;
—Psalm 103:9-1

2. *“A Christian will find it cheaper to pardon than to resent. Forgiveness saves the expense of anger, the cost of hatred, the waste of spirits.”* —Hannah More

“And you know, when you’ve experienced grace and you feel like you’ve been forgiven, you’re a lot more forgiving of other people. You’re a lot more gracious to others.”

—Rick Warren

“Whenever I see myself before God and realize something of what my blessed Lord has done for me at Calvary, I am ready to forgive anybody anything. I cannot withhold it. I do not even want to withhold it.” —Martyn Lloyd-Jones

“To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.” —C. S. Lewis

The Power of God’s Forgiveness is...

First, the pathway to right relationship with God eternally – Colossians 2:13-14

Second, the requisite to right fellowship with God daily – Matthew 6:14-15

Third, the Vehicle to peace with others daily – Colossians 3:12-13

CONCLUSION: Greeting each day with a forgiving spirit is not only possible but powerful beyond imagination. Freedom in Christ creates freedom to forgive others, and that manner of living enjoys peace with God and with men.