

Teaching on Release and Forgiveness

by Gareth Evans

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of forgiveness as a means to release ourselves and others from spiritual bondage and to facilitate healing and reconciliation.

Scripture: Matthew 16:19, Matthew 18:15, Luke 23:34, John 20:23, Acts 7:60, Hebrews 12:15, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Forgiveness", "Reconciliation"

Description

Gareth Evans preaches on the importance of not letting resentment grow when someone has sinned against you, emphasizing the need to deal with soul wounds in a Biblical way. By forgiving the offender and asking God for forgiveness on their behalf, we release them from God's judgment, allowing God to minister to them and bring reconciliation. This act of releasing others for their sins enables God to speak into their lives, ultimately bringing healing to our own soul-wounds and fostering reconciliation.

Transcript

When someone has sinned against you - done you wrong! - it is important that you do not let resentment grow within you. "See to it that you do not come short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, defiling many others" (Heb 12:15).

You might also be wounded in your soul by that sin, a wound that will affect the rest of your life if not dealt with in a Biblical way. There is a promise given to us by the Lord that will bring healing from such wounds.

Your hurt, wound, reaction, resentment, etc. act like a rope tying you to the offender. Satan is well aware of this 'bondage' and is quick to use it in holding us back whenever we seek to go on to higher ground with the Lord. You bind the offender by refusing to forgive and he is bound in heaven to the condemnation of God by his sin.

His sin against you becomes a barrier between him and God, for we cannot sin against one another without also sinning against God. God will not forgive him unless he himself asks for forgiveness in repentance (1 John 1:9) or UNLESS you ask God for His forgiveness on the offender, thereby opening heaven for him.

This is 'releasing' him from God's judgement so that God might now minister to him, even revealing the sins he committed against you, and motivating him to reconciliation.

God has given to each of us a "key to the Kingdom of Heaven" for those who sin against us. When we open Heaven for that person, we enable God to speak into his/her life, ultimately bringing healing for us of the soul-wound produced by that sin, and reconciliation.

Read Matt.16:19 when God gives "the key to the kingdom of heaven" to Peter. "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven"

Now read Matt.18:15-20 when, evidently, the same key is given to all the disciples. "Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Note that the entire context of Matt. 18 is reconciliation and restoration . v18 is to do with forgiveness (not demonic 'binding').

God has promised us that when we 'release' people on earth for the sins committed against US, then God will also forgive them in heaven. However, if we keep them boundwe are also bound! If I hold a horse on a rope it is bound but I have to go where the horse leads me unless I loose the rope!

I advise the following procedure if you are to be set free.

Recognise that you have been sinned against.

Recognise that the offender is also a VICTIM.

Genuinely forgive him.

Ask God also to forgive him - release him.

Go ask for his forgiveness for any way you have reacted to his sin. (Telling others, etc.). This does not require your outlining what you said or did ... nor must you apologise in order to get an apology from him!

Consider Stephen in Acts 7:60 "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!"

Jesus in Luke 23.34 "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing!"

(I wonder if Saul of Tarsus would ever have become Paul the apostle if Stephen had not released him by the prayer above).

Another Scripture to consider: John 20:23. The first mandate given to the new believers by the glorified Christ. "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." - the same promise as above in Matthew, but worded differently as from a different apostle writer. (Note: you can only forgive sins - and the effects of those sins - committed against yourself).

In the testimony section that follows, all names and locations have been changed to protect the innocent. However, I have tried to keep the testimony as true to the original as possible.

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