

53: STRENGTH UNDER CONTROL: THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

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In Week 11: Discipleship in Relationships

4 Min read



“bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” — Colossians 3:13

Every experienced hiker knows there are things you simply cannot carry forever. Ever pack too much in your backpack and regret carrying the load by mid-trail? What seemed insignificant becomes exhausting. You walk more slowly. Bent over. Energy fading. The journey becomes harder than it was meant to be.

Many men walk through life carrying a similar burden. It isn't gear. It is resentment. It is disappointing. It is the memory of words spoken years ago, of betrayal by a friend, of neglect from a parent, of unfair treatment at work, or of wounds inflicted by someone who never apologized. Colossians 3:13 tells believers to forgive as the Lord forgave them. Most men understand the command. What is often left unsaid is why forgiveness feels so difficult.

Many of us secretly believe holding on gives us power. As long as we carry the offense, we think we maintain control. We keep score. We preserve evidence. We reserve the right to collect a debt someday. Yet the person carrying the burden is usually the one suffering most. Resentment promises protection but often becomes a prison.

Forgiveness is not weakness. It is strength under control. It is the decision to release a debt you have every right to collect. It requires courage, humility, and trust that God is a better judge than you.

APPLICATION

One of the biggest misunderstandings about forgiveness is thinking it somehow lets the other person off the hook. It doesn't. Forgiveness does not call wrong right. It does not minimize the wound, erase the damage, or pretend the offense never happened. Scripture never asks a man to deny reality. It asks him to deal with it God's way.

What forgiveness does is release your grip on revenge. It hands the case over to God and trusts Him to do what you cannot. That's why forgiveness is not weakness. It takes far more strength to forgive than to stay angry. Any man can replay the offense. Any man can keep score. Any man can carry the argument in his head for years, imagining what he should have said or what he wishes would happen. Forgiveness requires something harder. It requires surrendering the right to make someone pay.

What often goes unsaid is that unforgiveness never stays where it started. It spreads. The bitterness aimed at one person eventually shows up in other places. It affects how a man leads, serves, trusts, loves, and responds to the people around him. Over time, the offense begins shaping his identity more than Christ does. He becomes known more by what was done to him than by what God is doing in him.

Anyone who has spent time on a trail knows unnecessary weight becomes noticeable after a few miles. What seemed manageable at the trailhead becomes exhausting farther down the path. Unforgiveness works the same way. The longer you carry it, the heavier it becomes.

Forgiveness does not make the offense lighter. It makes the man carrying it lighter. It creates room for healing, peace, and forward movement. Most importantly, it reminds us that we ourselves stand before God as forgiven men. The deeper we understand the grace we have received, the more willing we become to extend that same grace to others and keep moving forward down the trail.

LIVE IT OUT

Think about someone you still carry resentment toward. Pray for that person by name this week. Ask God to help you release the debt and trust Him with justice. Forgiveness may not change the past, but it can free you from carrying its weight one more day.

PRAY THIS..

“Lord, help me forgive those that I cannot seem to forgive, like you have so freely forgiven me.”

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Practice builds the man.***

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