

apr 21

today i feel the need to talk about forgiveness. we know the word tells us we must forgive to be forgiven and our Lord gives us a stark example in matthew 18. the one who had been forgiven much would not forgive the lesser debt owed him.

i know sometimes hurt goes deep. it is then we have to take it to the Lord and allow His forgiveness to flow through us. it's kind of like laying something on the altar and allowing Him to burn it up as a sacrifice. if we do it, even symbolically, He will accept it and give us the grace we need to forgive.

there are those who have said, "i forgive but i never will forget". that's not real forgiveness. Jesus has said our sins are removed from us as far as the east is from the west. do you realize as long as you keep going east, you will never reach west? as soon as you turn around, west is there behind you. that's where all sin and condemnation should be; behind us. ours as well as others.

that brings me to the topic of forgiving one's self. the wonderful apostle paul, recorder of most of the new testament, considered himself to be the chief of all sinners. (1 tim 1:15) yet look what God did in His life. he had trips to the third heaven. he recorded most of the new testament. he wasn't hesitant to chastise the other disciples when he knew they erred.

if we won't forgive ourselves, one is really saying the sacrifice of Jesus wasn't enough to forgive "their

sin". the shedding of His blood could not cover "their sin". how audacious of a statement is that?

we have this recorded from one who considered himself the "chief" of all sinners. "but one thing i do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, i press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." phil 3:13-14

the Lord wants us free from all sin and guilt. the thing we choose to magnify the most, will be the thing we have exalted above all others. i choose to magnify God and exalt Him the most. not my sin. "they [the former tyrant masters] are dead, they shall not live and reappear; they are powerless ghosts, they shall not rise and come back." isa 26:14 ampc

now the only time i recount my former "sinful" nature is to lift up my Lord and extol how great He is and where He has brought me from. "many, o Lord my God, are Your wonderful works which You have done; and Your thoughts toward us cannot be recounted to You in order; if i would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." psa 40:5

do i still fall short in my efforts? in so many ways, so many times. i think of the idiom, "throw the baby out with the bath water". who would ever think of doing such a thing. certainly our God never would. we keep the baby and throw out the dirt after we have washed them off.

so can you forgive yourself? the Lord can and does!

"through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed,
because His compassions fail not. they are new every
morning; great is Your faithfulness." lam 3:22-23

forgive others. forgive yourself. forgive the things
you've done or should have done. "He will again have
compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You
will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea."
mic 7:19