



The Bridge of Forgiveness

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (Matthew 6:12).

VCM-SOTM25

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“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.... 14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matthew 6:12, 14-15).

Life is like a journey towards a gloriously vital destination whose only access route is through a bridge. Failing to take the bridge leaves one stuck in the land of doom and destruction. Blowing up the bridge destroys the only access route necessary to reach the destiny. In our text today, this bridge symbolises forgiveness.

Jesus taught in His model prayer that God will forgive our debts in the same measure that we forgive our debtors - implying that our failure to forgive bars us from being forgiven by God, which in turn destines us to life in the city of doom and destruction. To further buttress that point, Jesus went on to emphasise two points:

- 1) if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you (vs 14)
- 2) if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses (vs 15).

We definitely need God's forgiveness for our sins to be blotted out, and for us to qualify for eternal life in heaven. By failing to forgive others, we are inevitably burning the very bridge that we need to cross over successfully.

Forgiving others is certainly not an easy feat to accomplish, especially when those others have wronged us seriously and show no sign of remorse, but when viewed in the perspective above, it makes it foolish not to forgive. It is like throwing away a glorious destiny just because of a wrong focus on the offence from others to the point of failing to forgive.

Jesus illustrated in Matthew 18:23-35 how easy it is to forfeit one's mercy by failing to show mercy to others “Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. 24: And when he had

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begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. 25: But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. 26: The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 27: Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. 28: But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. 29: And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. 30: And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. 31: So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. 32: Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: 33: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? 34: And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. 35: So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses”

Forgiveness is a decision. And God's grace is sufficient to enable us make that decision. In addition to the blessings of eternal life, forgiveness produces bountiful benefits for this life, including healing, unblocking of emotional channels and convicting others for need of salvation for their souls. Determine today to live a continuous life of forgiving others.