

Forgiving Others
"Of you it is required to forgive"
Outline - Mike Baird

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Forgiving others

- 8 steps to Repentance
 - Recognize, Remorse, abandon, confess, restitution, **Forgive to be forgiven**,
Keep all the commandments, take of the Sacrament worthily
- David E Sorenson:
"Irrigation Water" ("Forgiveness Will Change Bitterness to Love," Ensign, May 2003, 10)

Forgive to be forgiven

- Matthew 6:14-15
"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:
But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."
- Moroni 7:18
"And now, my brethren, seeing that ye know the light by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged"

It is a sin to not forgive

- D&C 64:7-12

"ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there *remaineth in him the greater sin.*

I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men"

We must forgive to find peace

- Matt 5:7

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy"

- Gordon B Hinckley:

"If there be any who nurture in their hearts the poisonous brew of enmity toward another, I plead with you to ask the Lord for strength to forgive. This expression of desire will be of the very substance of your repentance. It may not be easy, and it may not come quickly. But if you will seek it with sincerity and cultivate it, it will come. And even though he whom you have forgiven continues to pursue and threaten you, you will know you have done what you could to make a reconciliation. There will come into your heart a peace otherwise unattainable." ("Of You It Is Required to Forgive," Ensign, June 1991, 2)

Stumbling blocks

- Pride
- Lack of knowledge
 - Not understanding the Atonement
- Lack of Faith
- Brass Serpent (too simple)
- Caught up in the injury itself – becomes our focus
- Wallowing
- We want others to repent before we forgive them
- Hard heart

Forgo Revenge

- H Burke Peterson:

"Snake bite" ("Removing the Poison of an Unforgiving Spirit," Ensign, Nov. 1983, 59)

- H Burke Peterson:
"The wise and the happy person removes first the impurities from within. The longer the poison of resentment and unforgiveness stays in a body, the greater and longer lasting is its destructive effect. As long as we blame others for our condition or circumstance and build a wall of self-justification around ourselves, our strength will diminish and our power and ability to rise above our situation will fade away. The poison of revenge, or of unforgiving thoughts or attitudes, unless removed, will destroy the soul in which it is harbored."
("Removing the Poison of an Unforgiving Spirit," Ensign, Nov. 1983, 59)

Do not be offended

- About Frazier Eaton
"When the Kirtland Temple was completed, many Saints gathered for the dedication. The seats in the temple filled quickly, and many people were allowed to stand, but still not everyone could be accommodated inside the building. Elder Frazier Eaton, who had given \$700 for the building of the temple, arrived after it had been filled, so he was not allowed inside for the dedication. The dedication was repeated the next day for those who could not be accommodated the first day, but this did not satisfy Frazier Eaton, and he apostatized." (George A. Smith, in Journal of Discourses, 11:9.)
- The Savior suffered scoffs and scorns for us too
 - Steven R Covey:
"Since the Lord suffered for all, this includes any who would ever trespass against me. Then why should I suffer because someone injured me? If I would repent and receive Christ, I would have the desire and power to return good for evil, to bless rather than to defend and judge. For in receiving him, I draw my self-esteem from that relationship and from his definition of me, rather than from the sometimes unkind, inconsistent, or fickle opinions of others" ("Likening the Scriptures Unto Ourselves," Ensign, Sept. 1974, 77)

Do not look to be offended

- Sometimes we are too quick to be offended
- How can we not?
 - Know you are a son/daughter of God

How often must we forgive?

- Matthew 18:21-22
 "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?
 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, *Until seventy times seven*"

Scripture examples of forgiving others

Christ

- Luke 23:34
 "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do"

Joseph (in Egypt)

- Genesis 45:4-8
 "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life "

Nephi

- 1 Nephi 7:16-21
 "And it came to pass that I did frankly forgive them all that they had done"

Modern examples of forgiving others

- "During World War II there were terrible examples of man's inhumanity to man. After the war was over and the concentration camps were opened, there was much hatred among the weak and emaciated survivors. In one camp, observers noticed a native of Poland who seemed so robust and peaceful they thought he must have only recently been imprisoned. They were surprised to learn that he had been there over six years! Then, they reasoned, he must not have suffered the terrible atrocities to his family members that most of the prisoners had. But in questioning him, they learned how soldiers had come to his city, lined up against a wall his wife, two daughters, and three small sons, then opened fire with a machine gun. Though he begged to die with them, he had been kept alive because of his knowledge and ability in language translation.
 This Polish father said: "I had to decide right then ... whether to let myself hate the soldiers who had done this. It was an easy decision, really. I was a lawyer. In my practice I had seen ... what hate could do to people's minds and

bodies. Hate had just killed the six people who mattered most to me in the world. I decided then that I would spend the rest of my life—whether it was a few days or many years—loving every person I came in contact with.” (George G. Ritchie with Elizabeth Sherrill, *Return from Tomorrow*, Waco, Texas: Chosen Books, 1978, p. 116.)

Stories

Irrigation Water

I grew up in a small farming town where water was the lifeblood of the community. I remember the people of our society constantly watching, worrying, and praying over the rain, irrigation rights, and water in general. ...

Under the stress and strain of our climate, sometimes people weren't always at their best. Occasionally, neighbors would squabble over one farmer taking too long a turn from the irrigation ditch. That's how it started with two men who lived near our mountain pasture, whom I will call Chet and Walt. These two neighbors began to quarrel over water from the irrigation ditch they shared. It was innocent enough at first, but over the years the two men allowed their disagreements to turn into resentment and then arguments—even to the point of threats.

One July morning both men felt they were once again short of water. Each went to the ditch to see what had happened, each in his own mind reckoning the other had stolen his water. They arrived at the headgate at the same time. Angry words were exchanged; a scuffle ensued. Walt was a large man with great strength. Chet was small, wiry, and tenacious. In the heat of the scuffle, the shovels the men were carrying were used as weapons. Walt accidentally struck one of Chet's eyes with the shovel, leaving him blind in that eye.

Months and years passed, yet Chet could not forget nor forgive. The anger that he felt over losing his eye boiled inside him, and his hatred grew more intense. One day, Chet went to his barn, took down the gun from its rack, got on his horse, and rode down to the headgate of the ditch. He put a dam in the ditch and diverted the water away from Walt's farm, knowing that Walt would soon come to see what had happened. Then Chet slipped into the brush and waited. When Walt appeared, Chet shot him dead. Then he got on his horse, went back to his home, and called the sheriff to inform him that he had just shot Walt.

Chet was tried and convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison.

(“Forgiveness Will Change Bitterness to Love,” *Ensign*, May 2003, 10)

Snake bite

For much of our lives, we lived in central Arizona. Some years ago a group of teenagers from the local high school went on an all-day picnic into the desert on the outskirts of Phoenix. ...

These young people were picnicking and playing, and during their frolicking, one of the girls was bitten on the ankle by a rattlesnake. As is the case with such a bite, the rattler's fangs released venom almost immediately into her bloodstream.

This very moment was a time of critical decision. They could immediately begin to extract the poison from her leg, or they could search out the snake and destroy it. Their decision made, the girl and her young friends pursued the snake. It slipped quickly into the undergrowth and avoided them for fifteen or twenty minutes. Finally, they found it, and rocks and stones soon avenged the infliction.

Then they remembered: their companion had been bitten! They became aware of her discomfort, as by now the venom had had time to move from the surface of the skin deep into the tissues of her foot and leg. Within another thirty minutes they were at the emergency room of the hospital. By then, the venom was well into its work of destruction.

A couple of days later I was informed of the incident and was asked by some young members of the Church to visit their friend in the hospital. As I entered her room, I saw a pathetic sight. Her foot and leg were elevated—swollen almost beyond recognition. The tissue in her limb had been destroyed by the poison, and a few days later it was found her leg would have to be amputated below the knee.

It was a senseless sacrifice, this price of revenge. How much better it would have been if, after the young woman had been bitten, there had been an extraction of the venom from the leg in a process known to all desert dwellers. ("Removing the Poison of an Unforgiving Spirit," Ensign, Nov. 1983, 59)

References

- Gordon B. Hinckley, "Of You It Is Required to Forgive," Ensign, June 1991, 2
- Spencer W. Kimball, "The Power of Forgiveness," Ensign, Nov. 1977, 45
- H. Burke Peterson, "Removing the Poison of an Unforgiving Spirit," Ensign, Nov. 1983, 59

- David E. Sorensen, “Forgiveness Will Change Bitterness to Love,” Ensign, May 2003, 10