

## Transcript - Why we Forgive

Message today, I think a very timely message for us. A very interesting message called, *Why We Forgive ... Why We Forgive*.

And on the outset it may seem pretty simple. I'm going to read a scripture here that seems pretty simple. But then it might be a little more in depth than what we may originally think. Matthew 18, I'm going to start in verse 21.

Matthew 18, in verse 21. It said,

**Matthew 18:21-22** *Then, Peter drew near to Him ... Yahshua ... and said, My Master, how many times should I forgive my brother with me who is at fault. Should I forgive him up to seven times? Yahshua said to him, I do not say up to seven times, but rather until seventy times seventy-seven.*

**Comment:** If you're reading a King James it might say 70 times 7. But in the Aramaic, it's actually 70 times 77, like really time without end ... *And Yahshua said to him, I do not say to you until seven times, but rather until 70 times, 77.*

**Matthew 18:23-26** *Because of this the kingdom of Heaven has been compared to a man, a king, who desired to take account of his slaves. And he having begun to reckon, one debtor of ten thousand talents was brought near to him. But he have not anything to repay, his master commanded him to be sold, also his wife and children, and all things, as much as he had, even to pay him back. Then having fallen down, the slave bowed the knee to him, saying, Master, have patience with me, and I will pay all to you.*

**Matthew 18:27-30** *And being filled with pity, The Master of that slave released him and forgave him the loan. But having gone out that slave found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, ... very little ... and seizing him, he choked him saying, pay me whatever you owe. Then having fallen down at his feet, his fellow slave begged him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay all to you. But he would not, but having gone away he threw him into prison until he should pay back the amount owed.*

**Matthew 18:31-35** *But his fellow slaves, seeing the things happening, they were greatly grieved. And having come they reported to their Master all the things happening. Then having called him near, his Master said to him, Wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt, since you begged me. Ought you not to also have mercy on your fellow slave, as I also had mercy? And being angry, his Master delivered him up to the tormentors until he paid back all that debt to him. So also My heavenly Father will do to you unless each of you from your hearts forgive his brother their offenses.*

So like I said, on the outset this is a good story to start out with. And it's pretty simple, right? All of us have a debt to pay, all of us. You know according to Yahshua who magnified the Torah. The Torah says you shall not murder or you get stoned to death. And Yahshua says, "But I say if you even get angry with your brother, you're a murderer. The Torah says you shall not commit adultery, but I say if you even think lust, you've already done it."

So again, none of us by the Torah, none of us can be justified. Because again, by the Torah, it's showing us what sin is. So I don't think there's any of us who are believers that are claiming we're justified by our works. And we all understand that in order for us to receive forgiveness and the grace from our Heavenly Father, we

need to what? We need to forgive others. Because if Yahweh forgives us the great debt that we have, then we should at least be able to forgive others the debts that they have. That's a pretty simple thing.

But now let's go to Matthew 6. Because it gets a little more, I wouldn't say complicated, but there may be a little more to the story than just the simplicity on the outset. Matthew 6 in verse 12, traditionally called ... they call it, *The Master's Prayer*. But this is basically the outline that Yahshua gave believers as far as how to pray when they asked Him how to pray. And this is the daily prayer that we're praying every day, the outline of it in Matthew 6, and verse 12 says,

**Matthew 6:12-13** *and forgive us our offenses as we also have forgiven those who have offended us.*

And then verse 14,

**Matthew 6:14-15** *For if you forgive men their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you will not forgive men their transgressions, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.*

So the same thing we see in the story in Matthew 18. Here's the slave that owes a million dollars and he can't pay it. So the Master forgives him the whole debt. And now there's another slave that owed him like twenty dollars and he wouldn't forgive the twenty dollars. And the Master got mad and made him pay. So that's pretty simple like I said, when you think about it.

But what if here now when we look in Matthew there's nothing about the person who offended us asking for forgiveness. It doesn't say, like we just read in Matthew 18, if your brother offended you seven times in a day and asked for forgiveness you were to forgive him. I mean that's pretty simple of course. How can any true believer in the world not forgive somebody who asks for forgiveness?

But in Matthew, and we're going to see in other scriptures, it's not only if someone is asking for forgiveness that we have to forgive. We have to **unconditionally** forgive everybody that wrongs us, no matter what the situation is. We have to unconditionally forgive everybody who sins against us.

So, the next question that comes up would be, why would we forgive a person who doesn't repent and doesn't ask for forgiveness? What would be the reasoning behind it? And that's really what this message is today. I have another message I did several years ago called, *Forgiveness*. That basically is just dealing with the whole subject of forgiveness. But today I really want to deal with why we need to forgive people, whether they're asking for it or not.

That every true believer in Yahshua, we have the responsibility before Yahweh to forgive **everyone and anyone** who wrongs us, whether they ask for forgiveness or not. Let's go to Ephesians 4. And we'll start getting into it, because it actually is a very, very important subject. Because we're going to see what happens when we hold grudges. When we don't forgive. And it really ... our forgiveness should not be dependent on the other person repenting or asking for forgiveness. Because I've seen that many times in the congregations that someone will hold a grudge for years and they'll say, "Well they never repented" or "They never asked me to forgive them." It doesn't make a difference. As we're going to see, Yahweh wants us to **unconditionally** forgive everybody that has ever wronged us.

And actually when you're becoming a believer at your baptism, that's actually part of even your baptism commitment. But Ephesians 4, starting in verse 25, He says,

**Ephesians 4:25-28** *Therefore, put away from you lying, and speak the truth each with his neighbor; for we are members one of another. "Be angry but do not sin;" do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the Devil a chance. The one stealing, let him steal no more, but rather let him labor, working what is good with the hands, that he may have something to give to the one who has need.*

**Ephesians 4:29-32** *Let not any evil word go out from your mouth, but words that are good and useful for edification that it may impart blessing to those who hear them. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of Yahweh, by whom you were sealed to the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and anger, and wrath, and tumult, and evil speaking be put away from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as Yahweh has forgiven us through Messiah.*

**Comment:** So we're starting to see the picture here. Literally, look at verse 30, *do not **grieve** the Holy Spirit of Yahweh*; how can we grieve it? By letting, ***all bitterness and anger*** and wrath.

See, if somebody offends you, and they really offend you; somebody, they say something to you, they do something to you and they don't ask for forgiveness. If you don't unconditionally forgive them, what's going to happen? You're going to start to build bitterness in your heart. And then you're going to grieve the Holy Spirit. And look what it says here ... *Forgiving one another even as Yahweh has forgiven us through Messiah ...* which is another important part of this that we'll get into in a few minutes. But if we don't forgive from our heart, we're going to harbor impure thoughts and bear a root of bitterness. And we're going to be lacking in our grace. Because Yahweh clearly says, unless we forgive others we cannot be forgiven.

So like I say, the prayer in Matthew 6, that's a prayer that, not word for word but an outline of a prayer. I know every day of my life, I will **never** go to sleep at night without asking Yahweh for His forgiveness for things I did and things you don't even know. There's sometimes you can even do a sin that you don't even know. And maybe the person who offended you doesn't even know he offended you. You never know that sometimes somebody can say something and they don't even mean what they say. And you take it the wrong way and you're all offended. And maybe they don't even know they offended you.

So that's why at night we pray, every night, that even sins we don't know we did. If there's something we said, if there's something we did, that offended someone that the Father would forgive us. But if we want to get that forgiveness then we also have to give forgiveness to others.

Hebrews 12. It even gets a little deeper into it. Hebrews the 12th chapter in verse 14 and 15. It says,

**Hebrews 12:14-15** *Eagerly pursue peace and holiness with all, without which you will not see YAHWEH. Watching diligently that not any lack from the grace of YAHWEH, that "no root of bitterness growing up" may crowd "in on you", and through this many are defiled;*

So here we are again. What's going to happen if you don't forgive somebody? What's naturally going to happen? Your human nature is going to take over; you're going to get this root of bitterness. And look what it says ... *that not any lack from the grace of Yahweh ...* because how can you lack from the grace of Yahweh? By a root of bitterness. Because if you're not forgiving someone else then you're not giving Yahweh's grace. You're holding, actually, your own forgiveness back. And that's why this is a **really, really serious thing**. Very serious. That a root of bitterness actually **defiles** us, like it says here.

We are forgiving the person, for ourself as much as for them. By releasing forgiveness to someone, whether they ask or not, you're actually releasing yourself from not gaining bitterness toward somebody else, or another individual. So it's very important.

Let's go to Jacob, the third chapter. Jacob 3, Yacov. And we'll see here again ... I'm going to start in verse 13, Jacob 3 in verse 13.

**Jacob 3:13-15** *Who is wise and knowing among you? Let him prove his works by his good behavior, in meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy, ... root of bitterness ... and contention in your heart, do not boast and lie against the truth. This is not the wisdom coming down from above, but this is earthly, sensual, devilish.*

**Comment:** So again, when you're not bringing out forgiveness to somebody, and it's not dependent on them, it's dependent on you; because you have to give the forgiveness. You're going to get all these worldly tendencies which are, *earthly, sensual, devilish*.

**Jacob 3:16-18** *For where jealousy and contention are, there is confusion and every foul deed. But the wisdom from above is firstly truly perfect, then peaceable, gentle, obedient, full of mercy and of good fruits, not partial and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for the ones making peace.*

So very clearly we see that ... **Proverbs 23:7** says, *as a man thinks, so he is*.

So, if you're building a root of bitterness, what's going to happen now? You're going to start defiling yourself; you're holding your grace back. And now something that you didn't even do, because you might have really been offended; somebody may have really wronged you. They may have gossiped about you. They may have done something against you. So you could be completely in the right and now you're in the wrong. Now you're holding back your own grace. You're holding your prayers back from Yahweh. You're building a root of bitterness. And when you think about this, this is why ... did you ever think of the scripture where Yahshua said, *offenses will come, but woe to those who bring offenses. That it's better that a millstone be around your neck that you offend one of these little ones*.

Because why is it such a grievance sin to offend somebody? Because, when you offend somebody you actually did something wrong. If I come up to somebody and I say, "Oh, you're this or you're that, you're fat" and I offend them. Now, not only did I do something wrong by offending them, but now if they build a root of bitterness against me because I offended them, now it's a double sin. Now I've defiled myself by offending the person and defiled them by them being bitter at me. So this is why Yahshua said, *woe to those who bring offenses*.

It's a serious thing when we bring offense to somebody else. But if we're a believer we don't want to allow that offense to build a root of bitterness in our life.

So, what's the easiest way to fight against it? You know, ... *resist the devil, submit to Yahweh and he will flee from you* ... The easiest way is just to forgive. That's the example that Yahshua set for us. Whether you're right or wrong; whether the person offended you or not. You **have** to forgive. We have to forgive everybody, **unconditionally**, whether they ask or not. Very, very simple.

Now, what's another reason why we do this? Why do we unconditionally forgive? Matthew 5:48. What does it say?

**Matthew 5:48** *become you perfect or complete, as your Heavenly Father is complete.*

By **unconditionally** forgiving people, even when they don't deserve it, we're becoming like Yahweh. We're actually becoming like our Heavenly Father.

Let's go to Hebrews 5. Because we all know many times ... we've talked about this. We have Bible studies on this. We have tapes on this, on our priesthood. You know we're not Levitical priests, but we're Melchizedek priests, right? And this is a different priesthood.

Melchizedek priests are not about animal sacrifice. There's only One physical sacrifice in the Melchizedek priesthood and that's the sacrifice of Yahshua. We know that from **Hebrews 10** .... *It's a sacrifice, it's in perpetuity.*

But the Melchizedek priests is to be what? The Melchizedek priest is to be ... *a living sacrifice ... a living sacrifice*. Now look at what it says in Hebrews 5. Very interesting, according to this subject. Hebrews 5 says,

**Hebrews 5:1** *For every high priest being taken from men is appointed on behalf of men in the things respecting Elohim, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;*

**Comment:** So now, **every** priest ... we have to as priests of Yahweh, Melchizedek priests, we have to offer **gifts** and sacrifices for sins. Do you know that when you unconditionally forgive someone who doesn't deserve it, that's a gift offering to Yahweh. That's a sacrifice you're offering on behalf of somebody's sin.

**Hebrews 5:2-3** *and he can humble himself, and have compassion on those who are ignorant and go astray, for he himself is also subject to weaknesses. And, therefore, he is obliged just as he offers sacrifices for the people, so likewise that he also present an offering for himself, for his own sins.*

**Comment:** It gets back ... *take the plank out of your own eye before you take the speck out of your brothers.*

**Hebrews 5:4** *And no one takes the honor to himself, but he being called by Elohim, even as Aaron was also.*

**Comment:** We didn't ... Yahweh chose us to be Melchizedek priests. We didn't take the honor to ourself.

**Hebrews 5:5** *So also the Messiah has not glorified Himself to become a high priest, but He glorified the one who said to Him, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You.*

**Comment:** So again, by Yahshua being the High Priest of Melchizedek, of this order, He didn't take the glory to Himself. He gave the glory to Yahweh. And verse 8,

**Hebrews 5:8** *and though He was a good Son, because of the fear and suffering which He endured, He learned obedience.*

When we are wronged, when we are offended by somebody and we have done nothing wrong and we unconditionally forgive that person it is a sacrifice. It's a spiritual sacrifice that we're giving to Yahweh. And we're learning obedience through the things that we're suffering. By suffering when we have done no wrong we become perfected and we learn obedience. It is a spiritual sacrifice as a Melchizedek priest and we glorify Yahweh.

So literally, we are glorifying Yahweh and we are becoming like Him. Because think about it, grace is what? It's unmerited pardon. None of us deserve the forgiveness Yahweh gives us, right? When we forgive those who do evil to us and spitefully use us, then we are experiencing the greatest gift that Yahweh can give us in life. We are able to experience what it feels to be like Yahweh, to give grace to somebody who doesn't deserve it.

So, when you sit there and you say, "Well you know something, he didn't ask for forgiveness." Or "He never paid me back the money he owes me." What did Yahshua say? Don't the publicans even treat the publicans good? Don't the sinners treat the sinners good?

But when we unconditionally forgive somebody, just because we want to be like Yahweh, we are experiencing the greatest gift in life. We are giving grace to somebody who doesn't deserve it. In the same way He gave grace to us when we don't deserve it. And what are we doing? We're learning obedience through the things we're suffering.

So this is why it's **so** important that we forgive. Number one, like we said, we don't want to get a root of bitterness and defile ourself. But number two, we want to become like Yahweh. We want to have that heart that Yahweh has.

1st Peter 2 in verse 18, tells us the same thing. We want to follow the example of our Savior, Yahshua. What was the example Yahshua set for us? 1st Peter 2 in verse 18? It says,

**1 Peter 2:18** *Servants, be obedient to your masters in all fear, not only to those good and forbearing, but also to the perverse ones.*

**Comment:** Now today we can take this and we can use the example to say your boss at work, he's like a master. Be good to your boss, even if he's not good. But in this day they were real masters and they were real slaves. And some of these slaves were getting a whip on their back. And can you imagine that Paul's saying to actually be **obedient** to these worldly masters in all fear? Not only the good ones, but even the ones that are beating you? Wow! Talk about learning obedience through the things we suffer, right?

**1 Peter 2:19** *For this is **favor** before Elohim, ... This is grace before Elohim ... if because of conscience, anyone bears grief, suffering unjustly.*

**Comment:** So we can take two roads. We could sit here and say, "You know something, they wronged me. And I did nothing wrong, and blah, blah, blah." That's a worldly way and we just read ... What did Paul say? That's *devilish*; that's worldly; that's *sensual*. But Yahshua's way was what? He didn't revile back evil for evil. And He says here, *if anyone bears grief, suffering unjustly*, this is grace before Yahweh, becoming more like Him.

**1 Peter 2:20a** *For what glory is it if you patiently endure suffering because of your sinning? ...*

**Comment:** If you do something wrong and you're getting punished for it, what good is that? You're just reaping what you're sowing.

**1 Peter 2:20b-21** *But if you are suffering while doing good and patiently enduring, then your glory is greater from Elohim. For you were called to this, for even Messiah suffered on our behalf, leaving behind the example for us, that you should follow in His steps;*

**Comment:** So this isn't just a nice thought. This is actually exactly what happened with Yahshua. That Yahshua suffered on our behalf. He learned obedience through the things He suffered to become High Priest of the Melchizedek order. And now we're following His footsteps. So again, we're supposed to suffer righteously the same way He did. He set us the example.

**1 Peter 2:22** "Who did no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth;"

**Comment:** So you can't sit there and say, "But I was right." "I did nothing wrong." Wasn't Yahshua right? And all of us **have** done something wrong. Maybe not in the situation where you feel you're offended. But in some situation all of us have done something wrong.

**1 Peter 2: 23-25** *But He doing no wrong having no sin, who, having been reviled, He did not revile in return; suffering, He did not threaten, but gave Himself up to Him who was judging righteously; who "Himself carried up in His body our sins" onto the tree; that dying to sins, we might live to righteousness, of whom "By His wounds you were healed." For you were "As sheep going astray," but now you turned back to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.*

So again, this is the Biblical command, that we have to follow in the same steps of our Messiah. And it's not just to keep us humble. It actually teaches us self-control. And it teaches us to learn and be perfected and be obedient through the things that we suffer.

Now, did Yahshua forgive those who only asked for forgiveness? I don't think so, Luke 23 in verse 34; remember when Yahshua was on the tree of crucifixion? What happened? As these Gentiles were mocking Him, as they're spitting at Him, as the Jews were over there and laughing at Him saying, "If you're the Messiah come down off the tree and we'll believe you." Did He revile back? No. What did He say?

**Luke 23: 34a** *He said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

I don't remember anybody that was standing there at the crucifixion asking for forgiveness. Nobody. Even the disciples. Most of them weren't even there because they were afraid of the authorities. And even the ones that were there were kind of hiding with their head down. But nobody was asking for forgiveness that day and yet Yahshua said, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*"

That's the example that He set for us. Now, why would that be? ... Why would that be? ... Romans 5. Romans 5 in verse 6. And this even gets into a deeper meaning on why we need to unconditionally forgive others whether they're asking for it or not. Romans 5 in verse 6. It says,

**Romans 5:6-8** *for we yet being without strength, in due time Messiah died for unrighteous ones. For with difficulty one may die for a wicked one, and perhaps one even dares to die for the sake of a good one, but Yahweh commends love for us in this that **we** being yet sinners, Messiah died for us.*

That's pretty heavy. See it wasn't ... Yahshua didn't die and His sacrifice performed **after** we repented, and **after** we were doing good things. And now we're coming and saying, "You know something? Now that you've repented, now that you're asking for forgiveness, yes, now I'm going to die for you." No. *While we were yet sinners ... while we were sinners.* While we were in our old life. Whatever we were doing. Whatever evil we were involved in. He had already died for us, *The Lamb of Yah slain from the foundation of the world.*

And wow, you look at the days of Noah and how evil the world was, and yet Yahweh knew it. He knew the nature that was in man and yet He still ... *while we were yet sinners.* Why? Because He saw the potential in us ... **He saw the potential.**

So the same way for us, like I said, we have two roads we can go. We can play church and we can come and I'm not going to eat pork and oh, I'm going to do this and do all these outward things. But then when it comes to real things, then when it comes to offenses all of a sudden we're going to hate people. And we're going to do this, and we're going to act like the world acts. Or we can act like Yahweh. We can not revile back, reviling for reviling. And we can unconditionally forgive people, whether they deserve it or not. Or whether they ask for it or not. And this is where it leads to, like I said, the same way that Messiah did this for us, *while we were yet sinners.*

Look at ... go back two chapters. Romans 2 in verse 4, because this is the reason why we do it. The most important reason why we unconditionally forgive. He says; Romans 2 in verse 4,

**Romans 2:4** *Or do you abuse the riches of His kindness and forbearance, and the opportunity He has given you, not knowing that the kindness of YAHWEH leads you to repentance? ... The kindness of Yahweh leads you to repentance.*

How do you know that your kindness in forgiving somebody who wronged you even though you don't have to forgive them; even though they're not asking for forgiveness; even though they don't even maybe want your forgiveness; how do you know that, that will not be the very thing that leads them to repentance? How do we know when Yahshua was up there saying, "*Father forgive them for they know what they do?*" How do we know how many people that day maybe were converted because of that?

There's different stories and even historical stories. I don't know how many could be true or not, but there's stories about even Pontius Pilate becoming a believer in Yahshua after the resurrection. There's stories like the movie, *The Robe*, and some of these are based on factual things. That there were Roman soldiers that became believers because of what happened that day.

So now, if we don't act like the world ... and we just get mad and evil at people ... but when we forgive people unconditionally, even when they don't deserve it. How do we know that's not going to lead them to repentance? How do we know somewhere down the line they might not come and say, "Wow, something's different with this person. He didn't revile back to me when I wronged him that way." How do we know that that might be the very thing that will lead to repentance?

Let's go to Acts 7, because there's a good example in our Bible that this could be the case right here. Acts 7. And I'm going to start in verse 58. Acts 7 in verse 58. It says,

**Acts 7:58-60** *And they seized him ... this is when Stephen was stoned to death ... And they seized him ... Stephen ... and took him outside of the city and they were stoning him, and those who testified against him laid*

*their garments at the feet of a certain young man whose name was Shaul. And they were stoning Stephen while he prayed, and he said Our Master Yahshua receive my spirit. And after he kneeled down, he cried in a loud voice and said, Our Master, do not cause this sin to stand against them! And having said this, he fell asleep.*

Do you think these people that were so angry at this guy, that were ripping him apart, do you think they were asking for forgiveness? No, of course not. But you know something, it's really interesting because the next chapter goes into Saul's conversion. How do we know the apostle Paul ... that this very thing, that these words that Stephen was given and the zeal that he was giving it with ... And then when they're ready to kill him. He actually looks up and says, "*Father, do not hold this against them,*" just like Yahshua, *forgive them for they don't know what they do.* How do we know that this wasn't the very thing that caused the apostle Paul to come to faith?

You know there's a story that I heard years ago by Richard Wurmbrand. Whoever doesn't know who Richard Wurmbrand was, he was a Jewish man that was in Nazi concentration camps, for I think it was 12 years or 13 years. Him and his wife, just unbelievable stories that they went through. And there was a story that they told one time. That years after the war, that Richard Wurmbrand's wife, had met a Nazi guard who actually had killed her family. And this guard was ... couldn't believe ... he didn't know what to say. He didn't know what to do, because he actually killed her family and now they met. And she started weeping and told him how she forgives him. And that she holds nothing against him because of what Yahshua did in her life. And that man repented on the spot and became a believer because of the love that she showed for him.

So, this is not just theory. This is reality. This is where our faith is. If our faith can't get past this, then we have no faith. If our faith is only in rituals and doing certain things. Or judging people that go and do a certain thing on the Sabbath that you wouldn't do, then our faith is in vain. But this is where the rubber hits the road. And like I said, every day of our life we have to come to Yahweh and ask Him for His forgiveness. And if we don't unconditionally forgive, how can we ask Yahweh?

The other thing that I've always said with this is ... I've talked to people that have bitterness toward people, sometimes even a pastor or somebody. And they'll tell a story. And they're so firm in the story; and this pastor hurt me and he did this. And I'm thinking, it's like they're saying it so fervently. I think did this happen a couple of weeks ago? And they'll say, "No, that happened 25 years ago." And I'll think, wow ... wow. Something that happened 25 years ago, how can you still have so much bitterness?

Because you know what, the reality of life is, many times when there's a situation where two people are offended at each other and then they separate you may never see that person again. And you might be holding that bitterness for 25 years. And how do you know that person didn't repent 24 years ago? How do you know it? Because when people repent of something they don't always come to you. A lot of times they might not even be able to come to you. So somebody could have offended you and now you never see this person again. Maybe you didn't even know them that well. Maybe you were somewhere; maybe you were on a vacation; maybe you were at your job and another coworker offended you. And now you've never seen this person in 25 years and you're just mean and angry and bitter toward that person. And 24 years ago that person got on their hands and knees, prayed to Yahweh, asked for repentance for what they did from you. And you never even knew it .... you never even knew it. So why not just give the benefit of the doubt? Why not leave it to Yahweh and just give the unconditional forgiveness? Because we don't know ... we don't know.

The other thing is this ... and I teach this at the Bible School, perception ... perception. In the past year or two, I've seen so many problems in the congregation because of people's perception. And you've got two people sitting there and they tell the exact opposite story. And yet, if they took a lie detector test both would pass. Because in their heart they both believe their side of the story. So why is that? Because of perception ... because of perception.

It's just like I say, a man can open a door for a woman going into a room. And it can be perceived two ways. It can either be perceived, "Oh, thank you for being kind enough to open the door for me." Or it can be perceived, "What do you think, I'm not strong enough to open a door, you male chauvinist pig." It can be either way. So, did we ever think that maybe our perception was wrong? Did we ever think maybe we weren't even offended? Maybe the person didn't mean what you thought they meant.

Maybe you're offended because somebody told somebody something that you didn't want them to tell. But did you actually say to the person when you told them the story, "Please don't mention this to anybody, it's private." Maybe you never said it. And now they told somebody that, "Ooo, you got a new jacket." And you didn't want anyone to know you got a new jacket ... perception. So much of it is perception.

And sometimes we can be holding bitterness. And gaining a root of bitterness for years and years and years over a wrong perception. Something that wasn't even a real sin. It was only somebody's perception. So, it's important when we look at this, like I said, **Romans 2:4** that, *Yahweh's kindness has led us to repentance*; the same way our kindness can lead others to repentance.

There's one other really, really important thing as far as this subject goes though. On why we need to unconditionally forgive. And why, like I said, if we don't it brings us in serious danger of our own judgment. Let's go to Matthew 7. Matthew 7. Matthew 7 in verse 1 and 2, it says,

**Matthew 7:1-2** *Do not condemn, that you may not be condemned; for with whatever condemnation you judge, you will be judged; and with whatever measure you measure, it will be measured again to you.*

So again, in Hebrew they have different words for *judge*. And in English sometimes these get caught up in a mistranslation. But the Bible does tell us we are to judge, discern. We're not to judge, condemn. What do I mean by that?

Well, every day of our life we get up, we make a hundred judgments. What will I wear today? Where will I go? What food will I eat? So we're discerning. We're making discernments. And we do that a hundred times a day. And that's why the Torah is a lamp to my feet. Every decision I'm making, every discernment has to be based on the Torah and the Torah of Yahweh.

But we're not to condemn. We're not to judge, condemn. We're not to condemn somebody else. And this is the problem. When we do not unconditionally forgive someone, what are we doing? We are playing judge and jury in that situation. So what we're doing is, instead of leaving it to Yahweh who is the ultimate Lawgiver and Judge of all, we are being judge and jury. We are condemning them before the time. What does **1st Corinthians 4:5** say? It says, *judge nothing before its time*.

There's a Judgment Day and I'm going to talk about this toward the end. That Yahweh is not mocked. So if somebody really offends you, or someone did something wrong and ultimately they don't repent, they're going to have to pay for that on Judgment Day. And we'll talk about that at the very end. But the point is you

don't want somebody else's offense to ruin your spiritual life. You don't want it to cause a problem with your prayers to Yahweh. You don't want it to cause a root of bitterness to you. You don't want it to destroy your spiritual life and have you fall away because of somebody else's offense.

So, clearly from Matthew 7, we don't want to condemn. So, if you don't unconditionally forgive, like I said, you're playing yourself as the judge and the jury. You are actually condemning that person. And what we do is ... there are times you have to judge the sin, not the sinner. So, if somebody, let's say somebody committed adultery in the congregation. Even though they're not repenting; even though they're not admitting their sin; even though they're trying to hide it; it doesn't mean that you don't come out and go to that person like the Bible says in **Matthew 18**. And you say "so and so" ... you know this just happened to us in Uganda. One of the pastors was caught in adultery, open adultery. Somebody caught him with the woman right in the room. It was brought up to the person; he denied it. They brought witnesses; he denied it. They brought more witnesses; he denied it. And when I was there it had to go before the congregation. The congregation had to know about it. So there was judicial due process, judicial order set by Matthew 18.

So that's not what I'm talking about. That the act that we unconditionally forgive someone doesn't leave out Matthew 18. Because I forgave the man. I'm not holding it against him that he committed adultery. But he's not accepting that forgiveness. He hasn't repented of his sin. So he has to be put out of the congregation according to scripture until the repentance is made. But you're protecting yourself. And the same as his wife, who he committed the adultery against also forgave him. She's protecting herself from building a root of bitterness by giving unconditional forgiveness. Because who knows, maybe this man will repent tomorrow. Maybe he'll repent ten years from now. But by us leaving it to Yahweh, we're giving that leeway for Yahweh to handle it ... we're giving that leeway. So Yahweh will handle it. And we're giving the person the mercy and the grace that we would want the same thing, for Yahweh to give him the time to repent.

So, let's go to James 4. And we'll see this, that we are not to condemn. We are merely to discern. So in a situation where we have to discern sin, we have to do that. That's not a problem. The Bible tells us to do that. But we are not to condemn. Jacob, the book of Jacob 4th chapter, in verse 10. The book of Jacob 4th chapter verse 10, it says,

**Jacob 4:10-12** *Be humbled before YAHWEH, and He will exalt you. Do not speak against one another, brothers. He that speaks against a brother, and is judging a brother, he speaks against the Torah, and judges the Torah. But if you judge the Torah, you are not a doer of the Torah but a judge. For there is One Lawgiver, who is able to save and able to destroy. Who are you that judges your neighbor?*

*There's One Lawgiver.* So like I say, when we do not unconditionally forgive someone, we are playing ourself up as judge and jury. Which Yahweh doesn't want us to do.

So, let's get into now, what about the party that offends? Because someone, I know on the other side, someone will be thinking to themselves, "But this just doesn't seem fair." A person sins, like I said, let's hold this case that happened in Uganda. The man commits adultery and he doesn't ask for forgiveness. He's not even admitting he did it, when in fact he did. There's witnesses to it. And now we're all forgiving him. So is Yahweh mocked? Of course He's not mocked ... Of course He's not mocked.

See our part, it's almost like a covenant. In a covenant relationship there's two sides. And each side has a commitment in that covenant. It's the same way with forgiveness. There can't be an offense unless there's two

parties. You're not going to offend yourself unless you're some kind of schizophrenic or something, you have multiple personalities. So there's two parties in an offense. So what happens?

There's actually two parts to forgiveness. The first step in forgiveness is that we must unconditionally forgive the other party who's offended us. That's step one. The second step though, is that the sinning party must repent of his sin in order to receive the repentance and forgiveness from Yahweh. So that's the two parts to it. So even though we're doing our part unconditionally, remember like it says in Psalm 51:17 (should be Psalm 51:4), what did David say? He said,

**Psalm 51:4** *to You and You only have I sinned and done evil in Your sight.*

So whenever we sin, who are we ultimately sinning against? We're not sinning against man. We're sinning against Yahweh. So what we're doing is, we're actually just doing our part, as the example of Yahshua, of releasing it to Yahweh. We're letting Yahweh do the judging. We're letting Yahweh be the Lawgiver. And we're trusting in Him in faith that His righteousness will stand.

So, Yahweh knows the motives of all of us, even more than ourself. Yahweh knows our intentions. But we don't always know. Like I said, we can have the wrong perception and maybe someone didn't even really offend us. So by unconditionally surrendering our right that was held against us to Yahweh and forgiving the person, all we're doing is leaving it in the hands of Yahweh.

But for the person now to receive the forgiveness, he's got to repent of the sin in order to be forgiven by Yahweh. Matthew 10 is a good example of that. I'll show you what it says here. Matthew 10, in verse 12. And this is talking about believers. When you're going out 2 by 2 and you go to a city, look what it says. It says,

**Matthew 10:12** *But entering into a house, greet it; ...*

**Comment:** So now you go into a city; you go into a house, you have no idea is it a good house or is it a bad house? You don't know. You're just getting in there. He says,

**Matthew 10:13-14** *and if the house truly is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whoever will not receive you, nor hear your words, having gone out of that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.*

So again, I used to think about this sometimes and say, "Well, when I go into a house, if I just give a blessing to the house how do I know? Maybe there's a devil worshiper in the house and now I'm going to be blessing the devil." No. It's the same way; the same as I'm saying with forgiveness. You have to do your part to give the forgiveness, but the other person has to do his part to receive the forgiveness. It's the same thing with blessing.

I would always wonder why would Yahweh say, "*Bless those who curse you?*" Man, why would you bless them? Because, you can bless the one cursing you but unless he receives that blessing it's going to come back to you. And it's the same way here. So when I go into a house, I'm not playing the role of Yahweh. I'm not sitting there trying to think, "Should I give a blessing, or should I" ... no. I'm unconditionally blessing that house. But you know something? If that house is not of Yahweh and His Spirit is not there the blessing won't stick. Yahweh will not be mocked and the blessing will come back to me.

So that's the point, the same with forgiveness. We're not here to be Perry Mason and try to get into the minds and hearts of every person and figure out why they did something. Or how they did something. Or what was their motive. That's up to Yahweh.

We're to do one thing that Yahweh tells us to, **unconditionally** forgive other people. No matter what it is. No matter if it's, like I said, with Richard Wurmbrand and his wife and the most horrific thing where your very parents were being killed by Nazi stormtroopers. Or maybe it's just something little, where somebody makes an off-color remark to you in the congregation and you didn't like it. It doesn't make a difference. Whatever it is, we have to **unconditionally** forgive others so that forgiveness can come to us. And if not, like I said, if now in the case in Uganda, if something is sin and it was brought up to the party and they don't accept that it was sin, what do we do? The Bible tells us that in 2nd Thessalonians 3; 2nd Thessalonians 3, in verse 14, it says,

**2 Thessalonians 3:14-15** *But if anyone does not obey our Word through this epistle, mark that one, and do not associate with him, that he be shamed. But do not count him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.*

So even when there are offenses that bring separation, it doesn't have to be. One of the worst examples that believers give in life is when they set up and have to attack each other. Why does it have to be? ... Why does it have to be that way?

Hey, look at Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas couldn't get along together. Barnabas wanted to bring John Mark; Paul didn't want to bring him. Their argument about it was so heavy that they decided to go separate paths and work separately. But I don't see Paul and Barnabas over there then fighting each other, attacking each other, maligning each other. And even in a situation like this ... and there is a time when someone is bringing a false gospel, where somebody is doing something; where you actually have to mark somebody. But even then, it's not them against us. That's not what it is. Remember, *our fight is not against flesh and blood. It's against spirits and principalities.*

And even when somebody is being led by a wrong spirit, it's the spirit that's leading them to do certain things. But he says here, *do not count them as an enemy, but warn them as a brother.* So even when there's separation, the whole point of separation is what? So that the person that's separated will realize what he's doing wrong, repent of the sin and come back to the truth. That's what it's for. It's not separation because we hate this person. Now this person that we want to separate from them because they're evil and everybody can ... no, no, no. Even when there's separation it's to be done in love. And it's to be done with the ultimate effect of reconciliation. That's why I always say we are the ministry of reconciliation, not condemnation.

So, **forgiveness** is the first act. And how do you get to those points where people separate, hating each other? How do you get to these points where people get so angry that they can actually maybe punch each other? I've actually seen it. I saw it when Church of God ... which I came out of ... I saw people come to a Sabbath service like this and start punching each other. Can you imagine? And why? ... Why?

Because they were not using this principle of forgiveness. You can't get that angry when you forgive somebody. And that's why forgiveness is so important. Because forgiveness releases us ... It releases us. It releases us from bitterness. It releases us from anger. It releases us from worldliness. But if we don't forgive, what's going to happen? We're going to hold back our own grace. We're going to hold back our **own** forgiveness and it definitely will affect your spiritual life, big time.

Let's go to Ezekiel 18, last scripture. Ezekiel the 18th chapter. Starting in verse 20. Ezekiel 18, in verse 20. It says,

**Ezekiel 18:20-23** *The soul that sins, it shall die. A son shall not bear the iniquity of the father. And a father shall not bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be on him. But the wicked, if he will turn from all his sins which he has done, and keep all My statutes, and do justice and righteousness, living he shall live; he shall not die. And all his transgressions that he has done, they shall not be mentioned to him in his righteousness which he has done; he shall live. Do I take pleasure and delight in the death of the wicked? Declares YAHWEH Adonai. Is it not that he should turn from his ways and live?*

Drop down to verse 30,

**Ezekiel 18:30-32** *I will judge you, each man by his ways, O house of Israel, declares Adonai YAHWEH. Turn and be made to turn from all your transgressions, and iniquity shall not be a stumbling-block to you. Cast away all your transgressions from you by which you have transgressed in them, and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit; for why will you die, O house of Israel? For I do not have delight in the death of him who dies, declares Adonai YAHWEH. So turn and live.*

Now, we know although Yahweh ... it's not His ... He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. We know from the Scriptures that there will be people that go to a Lake of Fire. The Lake of Fire is not there to roast marshmallows. The Lake of Fire is there that people that will not repent of their sins on judgment day will wind up going to The Lake of the Fire. But it's not the Father's will.

So that is why for us, like I said, in Romans 2 in verse 4, that maybe by our kindness, maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, maybe it will be ten years from now. But maybe somewhere down the line, by your kindness to somebody that's offended you and not giving back evil for evil can bring that person to repentance. Because this **is** life and death ... it is life and death. And like I said, the same way why at times we have to put somebody out of the congregation. It's not because you hate that person or you're dividing up sides. It's to wake the person up. To admonish him as a brother, that man, you're doing something that can keep you out of Yahweh's kingdom. That this stuff is **serious**, extremely serious.

But in the end we know that all judgment is left to the Father and His mercy will prevail. And on Judgment Day that's all we can hope in our life and on everybody else's. But again, when we start judging other people; when we start having a spirit of non-forgiveness; when we start holding grudges against people, like I said, we've taken the place of Yahweh. We've put ourself as jury and judge. And now we can be holding back that person's forgiveness.

What happens if that person winds up going to The Lake of Fire? And the only reason he went was because we didn't show forgiveness. It wasn't because of his offense, because face it, we all do things in the heat of the moment. Maybe he could have repented, but it was how we acted to his offense. What if we caused, by our bad reaction to his sin, we caused that person to go to The Lake of Fire?

And this is why it's so important. So like I said, forgiveness is one topic. We can get into that, a whole another message. I've done it before, showing Yahweh's Grace and unmerited pardon with us. To forgive us of our sins, whether we've forgiven or not. But why we forgive is **so important ... it's so important.**

Number one, that we don't get a root of bitterness and hold back Yahweh's Grace in our life and affect our spiritual life. Number two, that we become like Yahweh. That when we give unmerited pardon to someone, when we forgive somebody that's not even asking; when we forgive when we don't have to. We're actually experiencing what grace is. We're experiencing what Yahweh feels when He forgives us of our sins. So we're becoming like Him. And like I said, who knows, if maybe our act of kindness could be the thing that could lead that person to repentance.

And the third thing why we need to unconditionally forgive is because the Bible says, *judge not or you be judged*. And when we hold a grudge, when we don't forgive somebody, whether they're asking or not. We're playing jury and judge. And we will get the same judgment that we're giving out to somebody else.

So, I pray that this message ... I'm sure that everybody somewhere in their life has had an offense with somebody. It can be even a husband and a wife. It can be children. It can be friends. It can be a member of the congregation. It can be a boss at work. It can be anybody. All of us somewhere in our life have had offenses that come. But you see now why, Yahshua said, *offenses will come*. That's not a problem. We will all go through offenses, *but woe to those who they come through*. And we want to make sure we unconditionally forgive. Because we don't want those offenses to come through us.

So I pray that this has helped in anybody's situation. And may Yahweh bless each and every one of you. And may His face be caused to shine on you. May His countenance lift you up. May His shalom be upon you. And peace coming from Israel, where we are filming this. And Yahweh bless you. Shabbat Shalom.