

Articles and Sermons :: Must I forgive those who refuse forgiveness? - Hank Hanegraaff

Must I forgive those who refuse forgiveness? - Hank Hanegraaff - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2017/5/18 13:13

Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matthew 6:12). Does that mean we have to forgive someone even when they refuse reconciliation?

First, the debts we owe one another are small change compared to the infinite debt we owe our heavenly Father. Because we have been forgiven an infinite debt, it is a horrendous evil to even consider withholding forgiveness from those who seek it. Thus, we must always manifest the kind of love that is willing to forgive those who wrong us.

Furthermore, forgiveness is by definition a two-way street leading to the restoration of fellowship. It requires someone who is willing to forgive, and someone who is wanting to be forgiven. If you are to forgive me, I must be repentant; otherwise, there can be no restoration of fellowship (i.e., forgiveness).

Finally, we must never suppose that our standard of forgiveness is higher than God's standard. He objectively offers us forgiveness and the restoration of fellowship. His forgiveness is not subjectively realized, however, until we repent (Luke 6:37-38).

Re: Must I forgive those who refuse forgiveness? - Hank Hanegraaff - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2017/5/18 15:01

Please watch the video by R. T. Kendall on "Total Forgiveness". I believe that this teaching is much more in line with scripture than the article by Hank Hanegraaff.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l9NLMlb4RPo>

Forgiveness - Derek Prince: If you don't have time to watch the whole video, go to the 34 minute mark

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOdvjh457jg>

Re: Must I forgive those who refuse forgiveness? - Hank Hanegraaff - posted by Sree (), on: 2017/5/18 17:50

It posts a very interesting question.

Quote:

Furthermore, forgiveness is by definition a two-way street leading to the restoration of fellowship. It requires someone who is willing to forgive, and someone who is wanting to be forgiven. If you are to forgive me, I must be repentant; otherwise, there can be no restoration of fellowship (i.e., forgiveness).

Does this mean that we can forgive only those who are repentant of their sins against us? I do not think so.

In all such questions, Jesus is our only example. How did Jesus forgive others? He said anything said against the son of man is forgiven. When did Jesus forgive those who spoke evil of him, after they asked for forgiveness from Him? No even before that. While they were still speaking evil of Jesus, he was forgiving them. So we too should be willing to forgive those who hurt us, without expecting them to be repentant.

But restoration of fellowship happens only after repentance.

Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2017/5/18 18:37

I fully understand what Brother Hank is getting at. I have been deeply hurt by fellow believers, and I have forgiven them without them repenting. Our fellowship grinds to a halt. It is often times awkward and sometimes the nature of the hurt I ends itself to repetitive injuries. I forgive but they do it again and again without repentance. That is why Matthew 18 is so necessary for true fellowship. When a brother does sin against me, I must go to him, lest a root of bitterness spring up in--not them--but me! There is nothing worse in my opinion than to love someone with a callous heart.

If we are to look to Jesus, He asked the Father to forgive them because they did not know what they were doing; that did n't mean salvation for them all.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/5/19 7:08

If we refuse to be offended, 99% of the battle is over.

- 1) if the offense is unintended, it would seem rather petty and uncharitable to take offense
- 2) if the offense is intentional, why would I want to give the person the satisfaction of knowing I am perturbed?

As Will Rogers said, "I am at the mercy of any man who can make me lose my temper."

This can be expanded- "I am at the mercy of any person who can offend me."

Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2017/5/19 7:31

There are some instances where I can definitely do that, TMK; however, intentional, repetitive harm from a brother cannot just be overlooked. You NEED to forgive them; hence the passage in Matthew 18. It is as much for your sake as it is their sake.

Love is not provoked, according to 1 Corinthians 13. So if something a Brother does, offends me or provokes me to anger, sure, I need the Lord to also do a work in my heart. At the same time, I will approach the brother, as I am biblically mandated to do.

Forgiveness is not a "better" option or the option that is most good. It is a command and a requirement of all believers, and if we do not forgive a brother from your heart, God will not forgive us.

Re: - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2017/5/19 9:19

Unconditional forgiveness does not mean that we allow sinful, unrepentant brothers and sisters to remain in the fellowship. Scripture is clear concerning church discipline of those that are unrepentant.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/5/19 9:47

I did not mean to suggest we should not forgive- obviously we must as it is a direct command of Jesus.

I would argue that Jesus was not offended by his murderers. He didn't need to forgive them. He prayed that His FATHER would forgive them, because they didn't know what they were doing.

I know what I am saying may seem odd but I believe it is true. Jesus didn't go around demanding or expecting apologies. He demanded that all men repent, which is subtly different.

I certainly am not downplaying or excusing boorish behavior and I agree that in a church setting such persons should be dis-fellowshipped- but that is for their benefit, not the person(s) they have offended.

Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2017/5/19 12:25

TMK,

From our perspective I most certainly agree. Jesus doesn't get offended by anything like you and I would. It is an entirely different matter with Him.

However, Jesus, as God, hates sin. It is an offense against His very character. Look at the temple cleansing. Jesus was angry. Look at Revelation. Who is opening the seals? The Lamb. What happens at the opening of the seals--His wrath.

1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Forgiveness through/by/in Jesus is a must for all.

Jesus said that He and the Father are one. If Jesus was asking the Father to forgive, you know that Jesus had the same sentiments, but God's love for us and His mercy transcend our offenses. "He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities."

Re: - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2017/5/19 12:36

"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)
Christ died for the ungodly, even before we repented. However, for us to receive the benefits of the cross, we must believe and repent.

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2017/5/19 14:02

Quote:

If we refuse to be offended, 99% of the battle is over.

I agree. But getting offended is not just a luxury for us Christians that we can either do or not. It is a requirement. Taking offense is a serious sin.

What did Jesus tell us about those who got offended?

Matthew 15:12-13 "Then the disciples came to Him and said, 'Are You aware that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?' 13 But Jesus replied, 'Every plant that My Heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by its roots. 14 Disregard them! They are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit.'

Whenever we get offended with someone, we are proving ourself to be a plant not planted by Heavenly Father.

Brother Zac Poonen always says that 'getting offended with others' is the first and foremost sin we have to overcome. It is like ABCD of Christianity.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/5/19 14:21

I have heard it taught that not taking offense is a function of love- see 1Cor. 13.

There are a few passages in Proverbs that commends the person who does not give into anger, which is simply the product of an offense.

Facts do not cause offense, but rather our response to facts. For example if I have not talked to a friend in a couple of years but there has been no offense, we can pick up where we left off. But if I am offended because he has not contacted me in a couple of years it would be more difficult to reestablish the relationship.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2017/5/19 15:34

I have heard many messages on forgiveness and read many books on the topic. I would say that Dr. Kendall's sermon on Forgiveness is one of the best treatments of the subject! Thanks for posting that one, Mike!

I have come to understand that forgiveness is not two-way, as one author claims. It is one way. Our forgiveness is not conditional on the response of the other. However, reconciliation is two-way. It requires an acceptance of our forgiveness.

We don't want to conflate the two!

I'm not sure about this word "offense"/"offended" when covering the topic of forgiveness. Are we talking about the inability to forgive one who has sinned against us? Or are we talking about an assault to our pride? Or is it something else? Are there not times we should take offense, and we don't? Maybe we're wandering into other matters of Christian thought.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/5/19 19:50

Diane-

The reason the topic of offense was brought up is because in **every** case (I would argue) where a relationship has been damaged it is because one or both persons have taken offense.

If we can learn not to be so easily offended we are actually showing love to the other person because the Bible warns against those who bring offense.

"The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, and his glory is to overlook a transgression. " Pr. 19:11

The two most important things in Christianity are relationships- relationship to God is of course first but relationship with others is second. We are much more apt to maintain our relationship with others if we refuse to be offended. Again, 1 Cor 13 reinforces this idea.

People who hold grudges are always wanting people to ask for forgiveness. Those who don't couldn't care less.

Which person has more joy?

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2017/5/20 3:16

...do not say "I love God" Whom you cannot see but you do not love your brother whom you can see...

"Love your neighbour as yourself"

"Do unto others what you would have them do to you"

"Forgive others as God in Christ forgave you"

"Freely you have received now freely give"

Should I go on...? :)

Blessings,

Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2017/5/20 10:37

I have mulled this over for several days. Being "unoffendable" is not in the Bible. Our character, our thoughts, our actions, and everything about us should be conformed to Christ. It is true that if someone hurts your "ego" that the problem may be both people, or only yourself. I know this well. I used to be a bitterly jealous person before Christ did a lot of reconstructive work on my heart, work that He is still finishing today. It is true that if we would drop pride and selfish ambitions that many, many, many things would not even phase us. THAT is biblical. However let's look at these verses:

"Then He said to the disciples, 'It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him.'"

Look at the Lord's prayer "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

If Jesus had wanted to say "Be unoffendable" then He completely missed the opportunity to do so.

Don't nullify the scriptures by creating a standard that does not exist. It sounds super spiritual to say, "oh just don't have an offendable heart" but that isn't what the Bible teaches. Abortion, sex-trafficking, husbands beating their wives and children to death, mothers drowning their children in the name of God--if this does not offend you then something is wrong with your heart.

Lastly, in regards to a brother: if a brother sins against you, then you are commanded to deal with it. Do it in love, desiring full reconciliation, but it must be addressed. Jesus commanded it. There is no standard higher than His and to pretend like you are not offended, puts enmity in your heart, and you allow your brother to continue to sin against God. If you loved him, you'd address it biblically. That is why Matthew 18 exists. A brother who has sinned against another and refuses to repent should be cast out, for his sake and the churches--hence Hank Hanegraaff's statements.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/5/20 19:14

There is a difference between righteous anger on behalf of *others* especially innocent or helpless others and taking offense at a wrong directed at you personally.

Jesus said to turn the other cheek, but I know with all my heart that if he had caught a man abusing a child the man would have been in serious trouble.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/5/21 10:18

If someone sins against you, then you are to rebuke them, If their offense is not serious enough to deserve a rebuke then simply get over it.

If after the rebuke they repent then forgive them. If they refuse to repent after they have been rebuked and if the offense was serious such as the evil that Alexander the coppersmith did to Paul.

Then we are to turn over the recompense for the wrong to the Lord as did Paul concerning the case of Alexander the coppersmith.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2017/5/21 11:39

What a lot of people seem to be confusing is the difference in forgiving those whom repent after they have been rebuked

And that of simply not harboring bitterness against the offender that refuses to repent.

Michael Pearl has an excellent CD pertaining mostly to how victims of molestation and such are to respond to their aggressors.

"The Bible does not teach that Christians are to forgive everyone. In some cases it would be a sin to forgive. See what the Bible says and free yourself from the bondage of modern psycho babble. By Michael Pearl."

<http://nongreaterjoy.org/shop/when-forgiveness-is-a-sin-cd>

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2017/5/21 21:47

Colossians 3:13

13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord for gave you.

Matthew 6:14-15

14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Luke 17:3-4

3 So watch yourselves. If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. 4 Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying "I repent," you must forgive them.

Ephesians 4:31-32

31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

1 John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Isaiah 43:25-26

25 "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more. 26 Review the past for me, let us argue the matter together; state the case for your innocence.

Acts 3:19

19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

Isaiah 1:18

18 "Come now, let us settle the matter," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

Ephesians 1:7

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

Hebrews 10:17

17 Then he adds: "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more."

Daniel 9:9

9 The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him;

Colossians 1:13-14

13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Psalms 103:12

12 as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Numbers 14:19-21

19 In accordance with your great love, forgive the sin of these people, just as you have pardoned them from the time they left Egypt until now. 20 The LORD replied, "I have forgiven them, as you asked. 21 Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth,

Micah 7:18-19

18 Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. 19 You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

Matthew 6:9-15

9 "This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, 10 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us today our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. 14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Mark 11:25

25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

Matthew 26:28

28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.