

Crazy Love: Loving Through Offense
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Colossians 3:12-14 NIV

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. FORGIVE AS THE LORD FORGAVE YOU. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Matthew 6:9-12 NKJV

"In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS."

Forgive as we forgive.

Matthew 6:14-15 NKJV

"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. BUT IF YOU DO NOT FORGIVE MEN THEIR TRESPASSES, NEITHER WILL YOUR FATHER FORGIVE YOUR TRESPASSES."

"There is no slightest suggestion that we are offered forgiveness on any other terms. It is made perfectly clear that if we do not forgive, we shall not be forgiven. There are no two ways about it." — **C.S. Lewis**

Gaining Perspective:

1. How we view ourselves vs. others

Matthew 18:21-35 NLT

Then Peter came to Him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" "No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven! Therefore, the Kingdom of

Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. He couldn't pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt. But the man fell down before his master and begged him, 'Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.' Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt. But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment. His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it,' he pleaded. But his creditor wouldn't wait. **HE HAD THE MAN ARRESTED AND PUT IN PRISON UNTIL THE DEBT COULD BE PAID IN FULL.** When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, 'You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. Shouldn't you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?' Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt. **THAT'S WHAT MY HEAVENLY FATHER WILL DO TO YOU IF YOU REFUSE TO FORGIVE YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS FROM YOUR HEART."**

Forgiving Ourselves vs. Others:

OURSELVES	OTHERS
Jesus earned it.	They need to earn it.
Forgive me now.	Forgive them later.
I've learned from it.	Give it a few months or years.
That was not my intention.	They knew what they were doing.

John 13:34 NLT

So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.

There's no one on earth who is worth more than you, and there is no one on earth who is worth less than you.

Philippians 3:13 NLT

No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, BUT I FOCUS ON THIS ONE THING: FORGETTING THE PAST AND LOOKING FORWARD to what lies ahead.

Enemy: a person who is actively opposed or hostile to someone or something

How Many of You Would Say ...

- I have at least one enemy (a person) that I can name.
- My enemy is an opposing people group, political party, nation to my native country, business competitor, moral views or ideals, etc.
- I have no enemies, but I do have people who offend me from time to time.
- I have no enemies, and I am not currently offended by anyone.
- There are some people I find it extremely difficult to love.

2. How we view our offenders

Matthew 5:43-45 NKJV

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, LOVE YOUR ENEMIES, BLESS THOSE WHO CURSE YOU, DO GOOD TO THOSE WHO HATE YOU, AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO SPITEFULLY USE YOU AND PERSECUTE YOU, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

“There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies.”
— **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Romans 9:20-23 NASB

... The thing molded will not say to the molder, “Why did you make me like this,” will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use? What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? AND HE DID SO TO MAKE KNOWN THE RICHES OF HIS GLORY UPON VESSELS OF MERCY, which He prepared beforehand for glory.

Proverbs 15:1 NIV

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

2 Timothy 2:20 ESV

Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable.

2 Timothy 2:21-22 NASB

... a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. Now FLEE FROM YOUTHFUL LUSTS and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace ...

“It’s about the love that God wants to show others through you, despite what they did to you.”

The Process of Loving Through Offense:

1. Pray for God to correct your point-of-view.

Matthew 7:3-5 NIV

“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the

time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

2. Pray for God's point-of-view concerning the person.
3. Process your emotions with God in prayer.
4. Posture yourself with a Christ-like attitude.
5. Communicate face-to-face or by phone (if applicable).
6. Remain committed to extending forgiveness.

Three Things Happen as We Forgive:

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." — Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

1. As we forgive, we share God's love.

1 John 4:8 NASB

The one who does not love does not know God, FOR GOD IS LOVE.

2. As we forgive, we show God's life.

Galatians 2:20 NKJV

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

2 Corinthians 4:10 NASB

... always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

3. As we forgive, we shine God's light.

2 Corinthians 4:6-10 NASB — Treasure in Jars of Clay

For God, who said, “LIGHT SHALL SHINE OUT OF DARKNESS,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. BUT WE HAVE THIS TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS, SO THAT THE SURPASSING GREATNESS OF THE POWER WILL BE OF GOD AND NOT FROM OURSELVES; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always CARRYING ABOUT in the body the dying of Jesus, SO THAT THE LIFE OF JESUS ALSO MAY BE MANIFESTED IN OUR BODY.

Matthew 5:16 NASB

“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

John 1:1-5 NASB

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

John 10:13 NASB

He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 14:17 NASB

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’” For of His fullness we have all received, and

grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.