



June 13 and 14, 2009

**“The Freedom of Forgiveness”**  
**A New Marriage – Part 9**  
**Matthew 6:12**  
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A healthy sense of justice says that wrongs should be made right with:

- a) confession
- b) a change in behavior
- c) restitution, when appropriate.

But people don't always do what they should.

If we wait for others to make things right before we forgive, we will likely become bitter and miserable and then suffer even more loss (Hebrews 12:15, pg 853).

1. **Forgiveness** is like releasing someone from a debt they owe us. It is costly and **we pay the cost for their sin** (Matthew 6:12; 18:21-35, pg 695).

But that is what Jesus did for us (Ephesians 4:29-32, pg 829).

**Forgiveness is not:**

- a) Waiting for them to confess and ask forgiveness.
- b) Waiting until we *feel* like it. It is a *decision* for now. Don't hold on to bitterness.
- c) Minimizing or condoning the wrong that was done.
- d) Forgetting the wrong.
- e) Automatically entering back into relationship or trusting them again.

**Forgiveness is:**

- a) Turning the person, situation, and loss over to God (Romans 12:14-21, pg 803).
  - b) Overcoming evil with good words and actions.
2. We are more aware of and bothered by the sins of others than our own (Matthew 7:1-5; 18:21-35).  
When we have wronged others, we must go, confess, and ask forgiveness (Matthew 5:24).
  3. If you are consumed with regret over your own past failures and sins, ask yourself if your requirements for forgiveness and release are higher than God's.

**Study Questions for Next Week**  
**1 Corinthians 8**

1. What are our American idols? What makes something an idol? What are yours?
2. What is the parallel of “*not eating meat*” for us in our culture? For you specifically?
3. Is there something the Lord wants you to give up? For whom? Why?
4. How does the sentence in v 1 “*Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up,*” fit in the context of this chapter and in your life?