

# Securing & Extending Forgiveness

( Handout 94 )

What follows is my personal conviction concerning the understanding and application of some passages in Mt. 6 - those verses especially being vv. 12, 14, 15.

[ This article presents only ONE (of hundreds) of examples of the CRUCIAL Truth tied to the FULL COUNSEL of God needing to be honored by folks, lest we walk in deception due to half-truth perspectives. ]

My understanding is based on GOD's forgiving mercy toward mankind:

He purchased forgiveness for all\* BUT goes on to ask we individually accept His provision. Through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, all sins have been paid for before God. While this is true, it is also true that there is no universal salvation for all IF folks don't come to God on His terms. His condition for salvation (efficacious application of the universal gift by personal reception of His gift through faith) – purchased by the blood of the Lamb – is this:

All have been asked by God to confess their need for salvation in that they are sinners. The seeker of salvation must acknowledge it is God alone who has secured salvation. In this context, one must personally accept Jesus Christ's gift of forgiveness of sin and victory over sin's wage: death. Our Lord Jesus established God's provision (gift) in His sacrificial death and victorious resurrection.

God asks us to confess & acknowledge our need for forgiveness. I John 1:8-10 offers huge insight on this matter. God's *way* continues to take shape: Jesus Christ's initial Gospel appeal included repentance.

Summary:                      God has provided the means of forgiveness. In this He has actually forgiven ALL but ...  
  To personally **apply** God's provision of salvation, one must personally **accept** His gift on His terms, thus the need to RECEIVE, personally, God's loving sacrifice for sins.

On to the stating of my understanding of how best to live out the Mt. 6 passages on the horizontal plane, one tied to relationship with others (in contrast to a vertical plane – relationship with God) ...

In light of the doctrine of God and the example He presents (outlined above), I want to **emulate** these Truths in my horizontal relationships with others, especially when it comes to reconciling and forgiving others when a sin has created or contributed to a breach in relationship. ...

vs. 12                      Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
vs. 14 & 15              The way we treat others will come back to us, as God will treat us likewise. If we forgive, God will forgive us; If we do not forgive, neither will God forgive us.

Applications We need to forgive others even if they have not asked for forgiveness. As God forgives mankind through His Son's sacrifice, so too should we forgive others.

While / Although we forgive others, relational reconciliation is NOT complete until the other party confesses and seeks forgiveness. This personal perspective of forgiveness of others is, in part, based upon God's interaction with mankind as outlined on the opening page.

Picture I forgive another\*\* (even if the other has not asked forgiveness and/or has sought it). In this act I am not held captive by the sins of others. I'm free in forgiving my enemies. While the above is true, the *full picture* of this matter also includes this: The relationship is still not completely restored until the other confesses and asks for forgiveness. When this occurs, I must, given our Lord's instructions concerning forgiveness, confirm my forgiveness toward the person. The other, then, needs to receive/acknowledge my forgiveness. Until that step of going to the person and apologizing occurs, the full resolution toward relational reconciliation is NOT complete.

This matter of forgiveness includes other facets, ones which are addressed in the whole Counsel of God's Word. These other aspects of the full teaching of biblical forgiveness must be included in one's practical application (life actions) of forgiving others.

\* John 3:16 & I John 2:2 clearly state God's provision of forgiveness of sin was made for the whole world. Yes, it is only efficacious for those who endure in their new birth but the atonement of Jesus Christ was provided to make payment for the sins of the whole world.

\*\* E.g. Crystal & Renee My heart deeply grieves as a result of the unwillingness of these women to make right our broken relationship.

I have forgiven them – even of their ongoing sin – but our relationships have yet to be restored since they have not come to me and confessed their sin. (Consider the prodigal son and his father. The father waited until his son's confession and repentance – taking place in his coming home.)