



By Jeanne Sheffield Estrada, Th.D.

ARTICLE 4: Forgiving God

This is the half-way point of our 8 week study on the many issues of forgiveness when we first started with the topic “Why Should I Forgive Someone Who Has Hurt Me? Then we discussed “I Can Forgive, But I Can’t Forget?” The last article focused on the topic directly on YOU, with the deep rooted issue we called “Why Can’t I Forgive Myself”. Now, today we’re addressing the topic, “Forgiving God”.

Every step you’re taking forward is a step closer to your goal. Remember where we’re headed? It’s called The Restoration Place, the place of surrender, the place of peace where forgiveness finally lives inside your very soul.

It’s always a good idea to take notes as we go along, so be sure and have your paper and pen ready. Are you ready? Ok, let’s begin.

Have you ever been angry with God? Do you think God turned His back on you during those moments when you shouted out to Him or cried your heart out and He seemed to be a million miles away? Moments He didn’t seem to care or listen to you?

One way we retaliate is to stay angry with Him. We may think that we can hurt God the way it would hurt us if a love one treated us with bitter coldness. Another way is to reject God by ignoring His existence. Still another is to say that He didn’t cooperate with our plans. We’re free to break as many rules as we like. Yet you may think, “He’d better not try to tell me I’m in the wrong when He’s the one who should answer for wronging me!”

Believe it or not, even the strongest Christians ask serious questions about God's investments in the hard circumstances in their lives. We immediately want to turn to God when bad things happen to us. In our anger or frustration we may ask, "Where were you when this was happening to me? Why did you allow this to happen? Why didn't you intervene?"

Well, you're only human, so don't be upset or condemn yourself. God wants to know your feelings. He doesn't want you to hide anything from Him. He wants to heal and cleanse the wounds you may have held inside for a long time.

The main issue is that we have to face a many lies at the bottom of it all. Something has risen to the surface and it is this. The fact is that we do not naturally respect God as God. Nor do we naturally want to know His will. What am I saying here? Stay with me. We must recognize the truth at a deeper level than before.

God is like no one else we know. To know Him, truly know Him, is to stand in awe of Him. Think about it. God is the One who knows all things. He knows everything single thing about you in microscopic detail. He is known in Hebrew as El Roy, the God who sees all. God is so vast and eternal that He is also known as the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

Sometimes He allows things to happen in our lives to teach us lessons which will mature us and give us wisdom. Lessons to teach us humility which can break down barriers and discord with another. He wants for us to eliminate pride which creates a wall that is so hard to break and is a major down fall for so many people.

For God to be truly God in our lives, we must grow beyond an immature expectation that He will say yes to all our needs or wants. Sometimes He says no. To know God means there is total trust in Him and everything is up to Him.

God has every right to rule in our lives. He created us. He says in Isaiah 46:9, "I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me."

Listen to the words of Jesus in John 14:15-17. "If you love me, you will keep my commands. And I will ask the Father and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be with you."

Many people are afraid to admit that they are angry or even disappointed at God. For one thing it's not what good Christians do. We may think, what if God gets angry with me? Who wants to live a life looking over his shoulder waiting for God's judgment to strike?

When the writers of the scriptures tell us to fear God they are not telling us to be "fearful" of Him. Fear means to put our trust solely in God and to revere Him. Yes, we know that the Bible tells us that God is holy, loving, and good in all His ways. He has no evil in Him. In fact the things Satan intends for evil, God can turn into blessings.

Let's look at how God is so helpful in helping you rid your anger toward Him.

1. God is not uncomfortable with my anger. He is not threatened by it.
2. God requires me to be honest with myself and Him.
3. Harboring anger alienates me from God and reduces my faith.
4. When I refuse to be completely honest with God my relationship with Him stagnates. Eventually it will stop altogether.
5. God wants me to admit I need to forgive Him. He sees this problem and He wants to call it to our attention.

Most of us need to take this first step to a new and deeper relationship with our Father. As we've been crossing over our imaginary bridge to forgiveness in the previous articles, we have discussed in detail about the danger of unforgiveness and how will turn into bitterness, if not arrested. Somewhere inside of us when we're harmed by another or situation and God did not prevent it, we're tempted to believe that God's words are not just promises that hold empty sincerity. Even our prayers seem to go nowhere and seem to hit the ceiling leaving us feeling abandoned. But take heart, here are some questions worth taking "stock".

Have you stopped trusting God to handle all things, especially those things that have hurt you? If so, can you see how this has made you lose faith in Him? Don't give up now... hang on, there's good news ahead! Are you ready to get completely honest with yourself and admit your hurt feelings toward God? Then let me point you to Jesus....

This may surprise you, but did you know that sometimes your god has been your own will?

It begins with humility that marks one of the greatest turning points in anyone's life. It can lead us to begin following God. Humility means that we take our place in the true order of things. It causes us to step into the position of God's plan and not our own. We agree to cooperate with the greater plan He providentially is working out.

James 4:10 reminds us, "Humble yourself before the Lord and He will exalt you." Ephesians 4:2 also says, "Be completely humble and gentle, be patient bearing with one another in love."

Humility can lead us to begin following God, not only with a new spirit and attitude, but to a new path, possibly to a new destination.

We make life so much more complicated when we think life is "all about me". When we think the world revolves our "personal universe", we live in frustration because the rest of the world refuses to revolve around us. This includes God, the One we may at times be angry with. When we remember to look at the bigger picture and calm our blood pressure, we will be able to use all the proposals I have offered to getting back in right standing with God.

Without the potter, clay is just dirt. “The Lord formed man from dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.” Genesis 2:7.

If you are ready to come to your heavenly Father and ask Him to forgive you for your anger towards Him and you are willing to get back into your right position with Him,

Let's pray:

Dear Heavenly Father,

I ask you to please forgive me for the anger I have held against You.

I realize that I have sinned against You and I am very sorry. Thank you for giving me your living word, your holy Bible to read. I want understand what I need to learn about forgiveness and your insight in how I can let the past go through the scriptures, and what You are teaching me. Stay with me, Lord as I keep taking more step forward on this bridge to freedom. I am half way across now, so please say with me until I find the Restoration Place. Please keep holding on to me.

In Jesus name,

AMEN