



## YOUR EPIC COMEBACK PODCAST

Episode 4: Fourfold Forgiveness

Published: July 17, 2016

Keith L. Bell

In this episode of Your EPIC Comeback, we will discuss the only kind of forgiveness good enough for God...

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32)

### **Introduction:**

It is one of the most common magic tricks of a magician. Take a sheet of paper or a dollar bill, fold it a few times, and then rip it into pieces right before the eyes of the audience. Next, they do a little presto-change-o, hocus-pocus, or abracadabra! And voila! They unfold a fully intact piece of paper or dollar bill... How do they do it? Well, one thing's for sure; if they don't have an identical copy of that piece of paper or dollar bill somewhere on their person, the trick will fail!

This sort of reminds me of the subject of forgiveness. I submit to you that forgiveness that is for real is four-fold, and cannot be true forgiveness without all four of these elements intact. Sure, many a psychologist (secular and even Christian) tend to focus on one, two, or maybe even three of the things I am about to share with you, but they often get them out of order. Yet, even if they do get them in the right order, they tend to leave out the fourth facet, thereby leaving their patients with something that might appear to be noble, but are not the complete kind of forgiveness that God approves of.

I've preached this message on several occasions. And something tells me that I'll have to preach it on many, many more. Why? Because we live in a world where people are becoming ever-so detached from reality and thus, from each other.

In the days before all of this advanced technology, when you wanted to see someone, you went to their house. When you wanted to speak to someone, you called them on the phone if you couldn't go there. We've locked ourselves behind closed doors and positioned ourselves in front of electronic devices, and so it is easy to shut people out when we want to.

When we needed something back in the day, we went to someone who could provide it, like a friend or family member, or next door neighbor. These days, everything is so convenient that we don't need to rely on many people, and so when someone offends or upsets us, we just "unfriend" them or "block them" from our social network.

Well, it is time, like never before to understand that we can play all of the mental and emotional games that we'd like. But if we claim the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, then when it comes to forgiving people who have offended us, we must realize that there is only one type of forgiveness that is for real. And that is the God-type...

### **1. First and Foremost, Forgiveness Is For GOD.**

- a) Be Like God (Eph. 5:1) *"Follow God's example as dearly beloved children." And how? Well...*
- b) Be Perfect Like God (Mat. 5:48) *"Be perfect, for your Father in heaven is perfect."*
- c) Be Holy Like God (1 Pet. 1:16) *"As it is written, 'Be holy, for I AM holy.'"*
- d) Be Merciful Like God (Luke 6:36) *"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."*

**2. Secondly, Forgiveness Is For The Offender.** *We just finished reminding ourselves that forgiveness is for GOD first. But how do we come to the conclusion that it is for the offender second?*

- a) The Great Commandment (Matt. 22:37-39). *Tells us that it is God 1<sup>st</sup>, others 2<sup>nd</sup>, and ourselves 3<sup>rd</sup>.*
- b) The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20). *Tells us that this thing is bigger than us and our petty grievances. We have a worldwide mission. But the world will not know we are to be trusted as Christ's disciples if we do not have love one for another (John 13:35).*
- c) The Great Communion (1 Cor. 11:17-34). *The Lord's Supper can be a blessing or a curse. Remember what Paul said happened to those who communed with the saints in an unworthy (divisive) manner.*
- d) The Great Christ-Example (Phil. 2:1-11). *Christ esteemed us all as better than Himself. Because we are all so unworthy, it actually took Him making Himself of NO reputation—ZERO! **This tells us that...***

**3. Third, Forgiveness Is For YOU The Offended.** *There are a few "IF" factors we need to consider...*

- a) IF You Have Been Forgiven... (Eph. 4:32) *"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you." But if that is not the case, then you have a right to hold a grudge!*
- b) IF You Want To Be Forgiven... (Matt. 6:15) *"If you don't forgive others of their sins towards you, neither will your heavenly Father forgive yours."*
- c) IF You Want The Unlimited Grace of God... (Matt. 7:1-2 and 18:22) *"The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged... [which is why Jesus said in Matthew 18:22 as well as Luke 17:4 that if you are offended by someone seventy times seven or even seven times in one day, you should forgive them. Jesus was speaking of complete forgiveness, which He by His Spirit in us has equipped us to be able to do.]"*
- d) IF You Want To Be Free... (Rom. 13:8-10) *"Owe no one anything but love them... love is the fulfillment of the law."*

**4. Fourth and Finally, Forgiveness IS For... You ready for this? Forgiveness is FORgetting.** *When we do something special for someone from our hearts, we do it selflessly and not for repayment or to be praised. So we might say to the person who is profusely thanking us, "Forget about it!" or "Hey, don't mention it!"*

*You see, God is Omniscient. So when he says that “Your sins and iniquities I will remember no more” (Hebr. 8:12), or “He will cast our sins into the depths of the sea of forgetfulness (Micah 7:19), or “As far apart as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:12), God is saying that I am completely aware of all you have done wrong. But I choose to not hold it against you in any way!*

Forgiveness that is for real is Four-fold!

***It's time for your EPIC comeback!***