

The Heart of Forgiveness

Text: Matthew 18.21–35

Theme: We must forgive or we will prove to be unforgiven

Introduction —

I. HOW GOD FORGIVES

1. **God's forgiveness is gracious but not free**
2. **God's forgiveness is also conditional: repent & believe**
3. **Reconciliation with God begins with forgiveness**
4. **Forgiveness does not mean all consequences gone**
5. **So, let's define God's forgiveness (avoid contextual dislocations!)**
 - God's forgiveness is a commitment by the one true God to pardon graciously those who repent and believe so that they are reconciled to Him, although this commitment does not eliminate all consequences.

Now, let's put this in context for you and me

II. HOW WE FORGIVE

1. **Forgiveness defined for us**
 - Forgiveness is a commitment by the offended to pardon graciously the repentant from moral liability and to be reconciled to that person, although not all consequences are necessarily eliminated
2. **Our forgiveness is to be gracious**
3. **Our forgiveness is to be a commitment**
4. **This is to be done on basis of repentance of other person**
5. **This now brings about a reconciliation, a new relationship**
6. **But what if there are consequences from their sin?**

CONCLUSION—December 20, 1974, Chris Carrier, 11, taken on way home