

Gospel versus Moralistic FORGIVENESS

There are two distinct approaches to forgiveness: The Gospel and The Moralistic/Religious Flesh

Seen At His Best

A Gospel Forgiver...

- has an "aroma" of having been with Jesus – humility, brokenness, openness, thankfulness for grace
- has a deep awareness of his own sin against God, but also awareness that Christ is a real savior for real sinners. (Luther's 'Big Sinners Club')
- experiences what is counter intuitive - the heart is actually strengthened in grace through forgiveness
- TRUE FORGIVENESS TAKES US TO JESUS
- experiences a sense of real community as people are reconciled.
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- forgiveness communicates five things:
I will not think about this incident
I will not bring this up and use it against you.
I will not talk about this to others
I will not allow this incident to stand between us or hinder our relationship
I will absorb the debt
*Peacemaker Ministries
- relies on the truths of God's word to bring his soul to the place of forgiveness.
- has a legitimate desire to keep the exposure of the sin limited to those who need to know.
- knows that she is capable of the same thing and approaches the person as a fellow sinner.
- makes it his priority to bring the repentant person to the grace and power of Christ.

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Seen At His Worst

A Moralistic Forgiver...

- has an "aroma" of self righteousness ("I would never do that"). There is little sense of the heart having been impacted by fellowship with Jesus
- evidences little, if any, awareness of being a fellow sinner who has offended God
- isn't really softened by grace and there is no movement of faith in extending forgiveness because of his own experience of the grace of Christ. Jesus is avoided by giving a quick shallow forgiveness.
- remains aloof and distant from the one he has forgiven; continually sees himself as 'one up' and the offender as being in his debt
- uses the exposure of the person's sin to build a case against the person to use against him later.
- doesn't use grace on his own heart so the forgiveness he extends is shallow or it doesn't really exist.
- is not real concerned with keeping the knowledge of the person's sin limited only to those who need to know ("You need to pray for _____ because he's struggling with_____."
- doesn't see herself as being capable of doing the same thing so she approaches the person with an attitude of condemnation. Takes the offender to Mt. Sinai rather than to the Cross
- makes it a priority to remind the Repenter of a life lesson