



# OAK GROVE ENCOURAGER

**"And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works" Hebrews 10:24**

*JANUARY 7, 2007*

## **All Forgivenesses Are Not Alike!**

Dale Carnegie once noted that the only animal the grizzly would allow to eat with him was the skunk. Grizzly bears in Yellowstone Park often come to eat at the place where garbage is dumped. This huge bear can fight and beat almost any animal in the West, but it lets the skunk share its meal. Carnegie said that the grizzly surely resented the skunk and could have easily killed the little creature in any fight. No doubt the bear would have liked to have gotten even with him for his intrusion. But he didn't. Why? Because he knew the high cost of getting even.

Most animals are not dumb. They are much smarter than many humans who allow their stomachs to churn all day, their minds to storm all night and their souls to turn black with hatred as they plot revenge.

Bitterness is the most dangerous of all plagues to healthy Christian living. It will eat away at the vitality of your spiritual life until your once-vibrant testimony is in shambles. It is the "cancer of the soul", and it claims millions of victims each year. It spreads faster than the common cold and threatens the survival of many churches.

Yet there is a cure for this plague. One of the most beautiful words in any language is the word "forgive." The word is a common one, but the essence of the word is in the last part, "give". To for GIVE means to give someone a release from the wrong that he has done to you. It means to give up any right of retaliation.

God's forgiveness, which must coordinate with His justice, is based upon the payment of the penalty by a substitute. Jesus Christ, His Son, paid the penalty for our sin by dying on the cross...Looking at Calvary, God is now free to forgive those who come to Him through the blood of Christ.

When God forgives He forgives completely. This kind of forgiveness is "Judicial Forgiveness". It is one of five kinds of forgiveness in the Bible. A failure to distinguish these kinds of forgiveness causes great confusion, unnecessary guilt and needless fear.

1. Judicial Forgiveness (The eternal forgiveness of all sins of the one who has trusted Christ. This goes with the doctrine of justification and has to do with the believer's relationship with God. It is once for all, eternal, and conditioned only on faith in Christ.) The Psalmist says, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." (Ps. 32:1-2). He also says, "As far as the East is from the West, so far has He removed our transgressions from us" (Ps. 103:12).

You can say right now, "As I have trusted Christ, all my sins past, present, and future are forgiven. God remembers my sin no more." (Ps. 130:4; Acts 26:18; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14. See also Rom. 3:21-26; Heb. 9:12; 10:17; Jer. 3:34; Eph. 2:8,9.)

2. Paternal Forgiveness (Restoration of fellowship with God the Father after the believer has broken fellowship by continued, unconfessed sin. This has to do with the believer's fellowship with God.)

The conditions to this kind of forgiveness are twofold:

(a) Confession (1 John 1:9; John 13:4-10; Matt. 6:12);

(b) Forgiveness of others (Personal forgiveness - see the next kind of forgiveness.)

3. Personal Forgiveness (Restoration of fellowship with another human being).

**Oak Grove church of Christ**  
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**Oak Grove  
Church of Christ**

(502) 749-9209

**Sunday**

Bible Class:

9:30 AM

Morning Worship:

10:30 AM

Evening Worship:

5:00 PM

**Wednesday**

Bible Class:

7:30 PM

**Evangelist:**

Bruce J. Dehut

Home Bible Studies Available  
Upon Request

(a) This facet of forgiveness is so important that Jesus conditions our forgiveness and restoration to fellowship with our Heavenly Father on our willingness to forgive others. Matt. 6:14-15; 18:21-35; Luke 6:37; Col. 3:13); Matt. 18:21-35; Eph. 4:31-32)

(b) Personal forgiveness has a vertical dimension—we must release the person to God. This can happen anywhere at anytime. Jesus taught, “And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.” (Mark 11:25)

(c) Personal forgiveness has a horizontal dimension—we must confront the offender and forgive if he repents. “So watch yourselves. “If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.” (Luke 17:3)

4. Social forgiveness (Restoration of fellowship with society (John 8:1-10). This may be a personal attitude in our own communities or involve us in ministries like Chuck Colson’s prison ministry.

There is little forgiveness by society today partly because there are very few things that society frowns on.

5. Ecclesiastical Forgiveness (Restoration of fellowship with the church) 2 Cor. 2:5-11; 2 Thess. 3:14-15. This forgiveness assumes a prior discipline by the church body and an evidence of a repentant heart on the part of the one disciplined. The purpose of discipline is restoration,

and forgiveness assumes repentance and restoration.

### Some Further Thoughts

\* You do not have to forget after you forgive; you may, but your forgiving can be sincere even if you remember.

\* You do not overlook people’s faults by forgiving them; you must forgive them because you do hold them to account and refuse to agree with or overlook their faults.

\* Forgiveness deals with our emotional response toward an offender. Pardon deals with the consequences of his offense. Unless we have the authority we may not be able to pardon an offense, but we can always forgive.

\* Forgiveness is a miracle of the will that moves away the heavy hindrance to fellowship, a miracle that will be fulfilled when the two estranged people come together in as fair and harmonious a new relationship as is possible at that time and under those circumstances.

\* Forgiveness offers a chance at reconciliation; it is an opportunity for a life together instead of death together. Forgiveness has creative power to move us away from a past moment of pain, to unshackle us from our endless chain of reactions, and to create a new situation in which both the wrongdoer and the wronged can begin a new way.

\* The alternative to forgiveness is, in the end, a ceaseless process of hurt, bitterness, anger, resentment and self-destruction.

Countdown! Golden Minutes Ministries, July-August, 1997, Long Beach, CA

## Lighthouse Laws

In U.S. Navel Institute Proceedings, the magazine of the Naval Institute, Frank Koch illustrates the importance of obeying the Laws of the Lighthouse.

Two battleships assigned to the training squadron had been at sea on maneuvers in heavy weather for several days. I was serving on the lead battleship and was on watch on the bridge as night fell. The visibility was poor with patchy fog, so the captain remained on the bridge keeping an eye on all activities.

Shortly after dark, the lookout on the wing reported, “Light, bearing on the starboard bow.”

“Is it steady or moving astern?” the captain called out.

The lookout replied, “Steady, Captain,” which meant we were on a dangerous collision course with that ship.

The captain then called to the signalman, “Signal that ship: ‘We are on a collision course, advise you change course twenty degrees.’”

Back came the signal, “Advisable for you to change course twenty degrees.”

The captain said, “Send: ‘I’m a captain, change course twenty degrees.’”

“I’m a seaman second-class,” came the reply. “You had better change course twenty degrees.”

By that time the captain was furious. He spat out, “Send: ‘I’m a battleship. Change course twenty degrees.’”

Back came the flashing light, “I’m a lighthouse.”

We changed course.

*Psalm 61:2 From the end of the earth I will cry to You, When my heart is overwhelmed; Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.*

## THE LORD’S DAY PRIVILEGE LIST

### Sunday Morning Service

Announcements: **Brandon Yates**

Song Leader: **Greg Walker**

Opening Prayer: **Arvil Young**

Lord’s Table: **Wayne Runner  
Mark Smith  
Andy Milliner  
Randall Alford**

Scripture Reading: **Chris Runner**

Sermon: **Bruce Dehut**

Closing Prayer: **Mike Shepherd**

### Sunday Evening Service

Announcements: **Brandon Yates**

Song Leader: **Greg Walker**

Opening Prayer: **Jim Phelps**

Singing Service

Lord’s Table: **Wayne Runner**

Closing Prayer: **Kenny Case**