

The Road to Forgiveness

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Nathaniel Bronner: When you can learn to see things from God's perspective, you will be a whole lot happier.

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And now for 5785, "The Road to Forgiveness," part 2. Get God's Perspective.

Nathaniel Bronner: Welcome to Brothers of the Word because brother, you need the Word. And right now, we're still in the midst of a series we're heading into part 2. When I finished the last series, I asked God what's next and He said, "You shall speak on the subject, On the Road to Forgiveness." Jesus said, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Its right after the Lord's Prayer, but it's fundamental and these are the words of Jesus.

Jesus said in a nutshell, "If you don't forgive other folk, neither will God forgive you." And we all need forgiveness so as we go through these series and these messages just dealing with The Road to Forgiveness. Last week, part 1 was simply, Acknowledging the Offense and this week, part 2 is simply to get God's perspective, get God's perspective.

Now, we can we can never fully know and understand the MIND of God. We can never truly see his total view, but sometimes if we just try to get just a little of God's perspective, it will help us.

There was once a couple and they lived way back in the woods, deep in the country. They're just been isolated all of their lives from all the modern stuff because they had to travel for miles in the deep woods, there were no roads back there, they just were deep hillbillies. And they've been living this primitive life and one day, there was a couple from the city and they've done this more, they hiked.

So, they hide way back in the woods and they camped for a few days there and left the camp. And one day, the husband he ran up on the camp. So he was just digging through the ashes and he found this mirror. The thing about it, they had been so primitive and it's been so back in the back woods, he had never seen a mirror before. So when he picked up the mirror and looked at it, he said, "Wow." He said, "Sure enough, I didn't know my pappy ever had this picture made."

So, he just put the mirror in his coat pocket, went home and took off his coat and laid it there. So, he had gone back out hunting so his wife had his coat and she looked in and pulled out the mirror and his wife looked at the mirror and she said, "So, this is the old hag he's been running around with."

See, sometimes because we don't understand what is our perspective of things of what we see gets totally off. So as we go down the road to forgiveness, we need to try to get God's perspective on some things. Just like when we fly on an airplane, we get one perspective looking out of the window, seating on the runway, but yet by the time the plane starts climbing, we get another perspective. Then when we're in the clouds, we get another perspective. Then when we're above the clouds, we get another perspective and yet the maximum that a commercial jet will fly is about five or six miles high.

And can you imagine God who is the Maker of the Universe, His perspective in the most of us have ever seen is five or six miles high which is little of nothing compared with the vastness of space. So, our perspective is so limited compared to God's, but we need to try to understand some of God's perspective. You see, as a principle, we always see ourselves better than other folks.

In Luke, Chapter 18 beginning of the ninth Verse, this is Jesus, also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised, "Oh, do you know a folk like that?" They trust in themselves that they are righteous, but despise others.

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Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector or the King James Version calls it a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, "God, I thank

you that I am not like other men, extortionist, unjust, adulterous, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I possess, and the tax collector standing a far off, would not so much as raise his eyes to Heaven,” but beat his breast saying, “God have mercy on me, a sinner.”

And Jesus said in Verse 14, of that 18th Chapter of Luke, “I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other, for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself would be exalted.”

Now, looking at it through our eyes, and this was actually basically a priest of what we would call the preacher or the pastor. This was the pastor and this was a politician or tax collector and everybody looked down upon the politicians and the tax collectors of that day, we don't have a whole lot of much of a higher opinion these days. But they looked really down upon them in that day and we would say, “Surely, the preacher would be more justified than the politician.” But the preacher said, “Lord, I'm righteous, I'm tithing(ph), I'm attending church, I'm singing in the choir, I don't miss the Wednesday Bible study or the Thursday Bible study. Lord I'm going to visit the sick, I'm faithful to my wife, Lord I'm doing all this, I mean look at this rascal over here. Lord, this rascal over here cheating on his taxes, he's cheating on his wife, I see what he what he put into Church and he didn't put anything in the Church. Lord, look at this rascal. Thank God that I am not like this rascal,” and yet, that rascal simply said, “Lord, I got all these folks, have mercy on me, a sinner.” And Jesus said, “That man, went to his house justified.”

So, we have to first of all try to understand God's perspective and forgiveness because oftentimes we won't forgive people because we judge them so harshly and we look at them and say, “You know, they all not to have done this or they all not be like that or they ought to be this way and they ought be that way and I'm this way. And Lord, this is what I'm doing. I'm righteous, but they are unrighteous and how can I forgive the unrighteous?” You can forgive the unrighteous the same way God forgives you. So when we begin to see and when we begin to understand God's perspective, then we will begin to have more compassion and able to open up our hearts and forgive.

Now, when we look at this thing, I've had some experiences. I remembered I was out on the West Coast, this is years ago when

I was at a hotel, I was at breakfast that morning and I had this plate of fruit. I had all kinds of grapes and watermelon and peaches and oranges. I just had a real healthy breakfast. And I saw this man walk past me, he was all out of shape. He was just all out of shape, he had a big pile of greasy sausage. He had three or four slices of bread just covered in butter. Then he had all kinds of jelly on top of the buttered bread and he had grits, just a mountain, just a whole lake of butter in the middle of the grits.

So this man was walking past with all these greasy food and he was all out of shape and I said, "Lord have mercy." That's just a shame, this man and all out of shape eating all these mess I'm just ashamed. And I heard God speak to me. He said, "That man is living up to the level of his knowledge and you sitting there with that plate of fruit knowing some of those fruits don't combine with others," and that thing hit me.

See, we always judge folks on that and we don't judge our stuff. We don't judge the fact that we're not doing what we know we ought to be doing. It had nothing to do with the other man does, we're not doing what we're supposed to be doing and we don't know what other folks are going through and we don't know where they come from. All we want to judge folks on is where they are and where we are at the moment and stuff we're not doing. But we don't judge and then looking at stuff of what we are doing or where our thoughts are. So it's interesting and we have to understand. We've got to see things from God's perspective and even with these preachers and the publican. Jesus said over in Matthew 21:31 and He was talking to the priests and to the elders.

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He was talking to the leaders of the church. He said, "Jesus said, barely I say unto you that the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you and the way of righteousness and you believed him not. But the Publicans and the harlots believed Him and ye when ye had seen it, repenteth not afterwards that ye might believe Him."

Let me tell you what Jesus said in a nutshell. He said, "The lowdown politicians and the prostitutes going to get into Heaven." Can you imagine Jesus walking through a pastor's conference and saying, "The whores out on the corner going to get into Heaven,"

because I imagined, walking into a pastor's conference, the pastors would have walked in and they would have seen a prostitute and then some of them may have been with the prostitute the night before. Some of them may have recognized the prostitute. But a lot of them would have walked in with their noses in there looking at the prostitutes on the corners saying, "Lord have mercy." That's just horrible. They would never see the Gates of Heaven.

And Jesus said, "Look, some of these politicians, and prostitutes, and whores, and harlots, they're going to the Kingdom of Heaven before you because He was talking to the priests and to the elders." So we cannot judge and we have to be able to view things from God's perspective. So, if Jesus could see some of the lowest and the men considered that society, if they would get into Heaven before some of the leaders in the religious world. How can we judge who won't go to Heaven or not?

So, when we come to ask forgiving folk, we've got to be able to see a Christian in a God perspective because you do have to forgive them if you are going to be forgiven. Now, let me make a point clear, you do have to forgive them, but you do not have to live with them and there is a big difference in that. I'm in business and I just tell you the truth. There's some folk I have to get rid of. If I'm going to run busy, there's just some folk I have to get rid of. I said, "Look, you're not doing your job. You're slacking off here you got to go."

Now, I'm not going to harbor any bitterness towards him, I'm going to forgive them, but I am going to get rid of them. So, there are some instances and there are some times. And see, I even told you the story where I had a contractor just did me all wrong, didn't keep his word, lied (00:12:33) and God told me to go back and give that man a big chunk of money. I said, "It took me awhile to understand that." And I finally understood it because this was my biggest business loss that I had ever suffered from somebody doing something dishonest and that I had to go back and give this man a chunk of money. It took me awhile to under why because I could not pay the cost of the ill will lingering in my heart and I understood that down the road.

So, forgiveness means, you do have to forgive them, but you don't have to live with them. And if folk not going to straighten up, if folk not going to do right, you have to get rid of some folk, but you

don't have to keep it in your heart that they've done me wrong, they did it. You got to cleanse that, that's what forgiveness is all about. Forgiveness is about getting it out of your heart. You see, when that man did me wrong, keeping that thing in my heart would have cost me much more than the monetary loss because unforgiveness just messes you up. You can't sleep at night.

And then everybody you look at they didn't look roughly like them, you think about them and if somebody just doesn't, that's unforgiveness, it raises your blood pressure, it causes all kinds of cellular mutations. It just cause all kinds of stuff in your world. You cannot carry stuff around in your heart against somebody else without it severely damaging you. It's as simple as that.

So we got to be able to see things from God's perspective and sometimes you got to get rid of them. Even Jesus said, "Depart from the workers of inequity." He hold it in his heart, but you said, "Get away from me." So there are some people you do have to say, "Get away from me, but you do not keep the ill will or animosity or resentment in your heart and in your spirit." And see, when you can learn to see things from God's perspective, you're going to be a whole lot happier. You really, really, really will.

I believe everything is controlled and orchestrated by God. The longer I live, the greater I believe that and I know some of you said, "Well, what about tragedies?" There's God, "What about murder?" There's God. Don't you know if God want to stop me from getting murdered, he can stop anybody from murdering me? So, if somebody shoot me in the head, God has allowed that. I don't think that's going to happen when it may happen on 116. I don't know how I'm going to leave at 116. It just may happen. So, it may happen, but if something happened to me, "Look don't you all be worried about Pastor Nathaniel, I'm going on the glory.

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Don't you be worried about me," All of the disciples died from horrible deaths. Everybody but John, they were cut up, hung, boiled, all that kind of stuff, that's God. God couldn't have allowed them to just go easy, live a long time, just die peacefully in their sleep, but he had them die some horrible deaths, but that was a temporary thing.

So, when you understand and you believe everything is orchestrated by God, it changes, “Well, what about war?” That’s God. “Well pastor, what about when a loved one dies?” If God has every hair on your head numbered and Jesus says, “Not a sparrow,” which is the smallest of the birds, “Not a sparrow falls to earth without my Father’s permission,” how do you think a human going to die?

So, God has everything under control. So, when you see it from God’s perspective and when you start looking at any event, “Well pastor, what about when you folk just walk in and just shoot up a whole lot of folk? How could God possibly allow that?” You have to be able to see stuff from God’s perspective and we only see stuff from the short lifespan that’s one hour and 40 minutes in God’s time.

We only see stuff from standing on the ground and God can see the perspective from a million light-years out in space. Where the Earth to Him is the size of a grain of sand and all of the stuff that we think is so big in our world, it’s small to God because He sees over eternity. He sees through all space, He sees through all time. So, when you can understand it from just even a glimpse of God’s perspective, all of the stuff that we think is so terrible, it ain’t no -- “Pastor, what about when I get sick, what about when I get sick? I got a cold, and I got a headache, I got a toothache, what about when I get sick? How can that possibly be God?”

And I was at dinner with my family yesterday and I was sitting there and two of my sons had a real healthy meal, then two of them had chicken fingers and French fries. And they had no salad, all they wanted was chicken fingers and French fries. So, I’m sitting there, looking at the chicken fingers and French fries. And now, see first of all, what I did not consider was when I was their age.

When I was their age, all I wanted was chicken fingers and French fries. Fried chicken fingers and French fries, I didn’t even want grilled chicken fingers and French fries, I wanted fried chicken and French fries. And that’s how sometimes we forget how we were at that age. But as a father, I could have said, “Look, I’m paying for this, I’m not going to let you all get that. You’re all going to have some salad, that’s what you’re going to eat. You

could use some green vegetables but I'm not going to let you get that."

But as the father, I understood just as my father had to do. He trained us, but he had to let us go our own way and he had to let us learn. And sometimes, God will have to let you go through some pain, so you learn because sometimes, we don't learn except the hard way. And children are like that, adults are like that, so I don't believe God wants any of us sick, but he just not going to make you do right.

And then you said, "Well, Pastor, why couldn't God have just made us like Wolverine?" You all know Wolverine in the movie? Anything happen to Wolverine, he just healed right up. You can just chop his arm off, another one just grow right back at it. So, I said, "Lord, why he just get shot and the bullet hole just plugged right him." He said, "Lord, why he got all these power? Why couldn't you make my body just like Wolverine? So, no matter what I did, no matter what I am, I wouldn't have to work out. Lord, I could eat all these kind of stuff I want to do, and if I wanted to eat this chocolate cake all day long, all night long, I could just eat, I wouldn't gain, you could have made me get like Wolverine."

And he could have, but can you imagine what we would be like if there were no consequences to anything? Can you imagine what our spirit would be like? So, God in his infinite wisdom, he's allowed all of this stuff for the weeding out and the sifting, so he can develop his children. So, when we get a chance to even begin to understand things from God's perspective, it just changes us. Like you know, when Paul became a Christian, he one great dream and his great dream was to preach the Gospel in the most important city on the face of the earth, and that was Rome.

But God had another idea. Now, see if it had been up to Paul, the way he would have preached it would just have been in Coliseum, to all of the crowds and that weren't the way God did it. God put him in prison. And he put him in prison and he was made a royal prisoner of Caesar. And Caesar at the time was Nero, and Nero was one of the most evil, mean on the earth who's ever been. But as a royal prisoner, Paul was chained to a royal guard 24-hours a day for two years.

But they had to change the guard at every four hours, they had shifts. So then every four hours, a new guard came on. Six times a day, the guard was changed out. Paul was in prison over two years, which meant he witnessed to 4,380 guard change. So, that means every time a guard was chained up to Paul, Paul could preach to him. Could you imagine just being chained up to a shown up preacher on fire? I mean, I know some preachers and they're just on fire.

James and I got one friend and we liked him a lot, but something happened, we said, "You know we can't stay right in too much because he just talked about Jesus all the time". Now, I'm kind of ashamed to say this, I really am, but he just talked about Jesus all the time. I mean it's just all the time and he really rip, but he had talked about Jesus all the time. And I'm really very ashamed to say this as the Pastor. But sometimes, I'm going to need a break. I just want to eat my fried chicken or whatever I got, I don't want to eat my fried chicken. I mean you know Jesus made that chicken. Lord, I just need a break sometimes.

So, he is just that fervent about Jesus. Can you imagine being chained up 24/7 to someone that's only talked about, that's only thought about -- so, I imagine by the time that guard's full hours was up, he says, "Look man, get me loose from this man because this man has been just talking about Jesus, all full hours." And see, we're in Church for an hour and a half and some of you all just be fussing about that. Can you imagine being chained up to Paul 24/7? So here, you had over 4,000 guard changes, being chained up to a man who talked nothing but Jesus.

But I want you to listen carefully to the end of the Book of Philippians. This is Philippians, Chapter 4, beginning of the 19th Verse, "But my God shall supply all of your need according to his riches and glory in Christ, Jesus." Now, we've heard that verse just over and over, but this is the end to that, "Now onto God and our Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. Salute every Saint in Christ, Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you. All the Saints salute you".

Now, this is the last, "Chiefly, they that are of Caesar's household," because he was guarded by the royal guards who were chained to Paul 24/7 and they heard Paul 24/7. So, you can't be chained up to that much power without it getting in you. You can't listen to that all day long without it starting to shape your

mind. And Paul says, "Particularly those who are in -- the most evil man on the planet. Particularly those who are in Caesar's household."

So, God had Paul chained into the royal guards and the royal guards became infected with Christ Jesus and they just infected everybody else. Now, Paul said, "Particularly those in Caesar's household." Now, Paul, if he had to choose, he wouldn't have chosen that route. See, what Paul said, "Lord, I want to preach in Rome." God said, "All right, I'm going to grant that." Paul did not expect to be chained up to the royal guards. How many of your lives are like that?

You see, God is working a plan and that plan may have been to chain you with somebody who will train you how to forgive, because they're treating you all kind of ways. But it trains your spirit to where you have to say, "I have to walk in the love of Christ. I have to forgive them, so I can be forgiven." Then some of you say, "Lord, why'd you put me in this situation?" God know they low down. God know he's going to give you a problem. God know, they're going to betray you. God know they're going to treat you bad, he controls everything, but it is this thing that allows you to elevate your spirit. It is this thing that allows you to show the love of Christ.

Why do you need faith and why do you need the love of Christ? Is everybody around you just loving you and good to you? The mafia is like that. Seriously, the mafia will treat you good, if you treat them good. You don't need the love of Christ for folk who treat you good, and kind, and right, and loving. You don't need the love of Christ for that. You need the love of Christ for the other folk. You're all set for the other folk. You need the love of Christ for the other folk. So God will place a lot of times, many of these people in your world to train your spirit and to take you to another level. So, you have to be able to see things from God's perspective.

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And as you're able to begin to see it from God's perspective, it will change your world. It will allow you to cleanse your soul to get this unforgiveness out of you and then God can begin to forgive all of your stuff. But you're going to live a much more peaceful life. You're going to be like what C. Elijah has been preaching about. You'd be walking in love and not walking in condemnation

and judgment. You'll walk in mercy and you'll walk in humility because you realized all of us have flaws.

For those of you right now who are struggling with the pain of forgiveness, I had an experience this morning, yesterday, I hit my toe against the bookshelf. I was walking barefoot, hit the toe. You all know how it is when you hit your toe, it didn't hurt right, then you know about 10 seconds later, it's going to be just be hurt and I hit big like bam, I was like "Oh, it is going to hurt sure enough by 10 seconds later."

So, this morning as I was coming to Church, I've got two places where I parked. Sunday, I normally park in the remote lot. Thursday, I'll park in my spot in the back. I said, "My toe is hurting this morning, so I don't need to walk up, I'm going to park in my spot in the back". I've got two quick access on my phone for the GPS, one press, and it will take me to the parking lot in the back. The other it takes me to the remote lot. I pressed the one to take my spot in the back.

But I noticed the directions was taking me to the remote lot. I said, "I must have pushed the wrong button, so I stopped that and I pressed the button again to make sure I pressed the right button, it took me to the remote lot. I said, "Well, Lord, this is unusual." I said, "Either there's a jam up on the other route or something," but I have sense enough to follow God's positioning system. So, I drove to the remote lot, I got out of the remote lot, started walking and I noticed I could walk fine without my toe aching.

Then when I got here, the preacher had these shoes for me, these pointed toe shoes, they're not the most comfortable shoes in the world. And then, she didn't have the normal thin socks, so I only had my thick socks. I said, "Lord, I got to put these pointed toed shoes on with thick socks. This is going to hurt my toe". Toe not hurting. Some of you think that because of the pain that you've gone through, and you've got some areas in your heart that's hurting, and you don't want to walk the path that God has laid out. And sometimes, it's a little longer path, but it is always better.

And you have to walk sometimes and do what God has led you to do to walk the pain out. And you will find that when you follow where God is leading you and God always leads you on the higher

road, of the path of forgiveness, of the path of letting it go. You're going to find that pain is not going to be there like you thought and you're going to wonder, "Where it is -- my toe, I came on this -- these shoes sometime hurt with nothing wrong with my toe. And I can't figure out why my toe isn't hurting."

God is the master healer, but you must walk the path that he's laid out. Not the short path that you want to take, because you think you got the pain. And when you follow that path, many of you, you'll going to find that your heart, your emotions and your spirit is going to be healed and even ye your body simply because you walked the path that Jesus told you to walk.

So, as we travel on this road to forgiveness, be sure to tune in for the entire series and God said with the first series, "There are some and you do not need to miss a single one of these," because there are so many of us and we struggle and we wrestle with unforgiveness because other folk have wounded us. But we will never be whole, until we can forgive.

Thank you for joining us today at Brothers of the Word, because brother, you need the word.

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