

Forgive and Forget

Scripture Reading — Matthew 18:21-35

“Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

Matthew 6:12 —

Mr. Chen, a former colleague in a high school where I taught long ago, died recently. I still remember a morning assembly at school when he talked about the Japanese invasion of China in the 1930s. He got very emotional in telling us how much he and his family had suffered under the invasion. He went on and on, even crying at times.

That was shocking to all of our staff, for Mr. Chen always appeared to be happy. Afterward he apologized to us: “I just could not forgive; I just could not forget!” I am reminded of the words of a psychiatrist who stated that if people could really forgive, many of the patients in mental institutions could be released.

We all know it is not easy to forgive if others hurt us. But what is the alternative? If we keep dwelling on our hurt, we let it keep on hurting us.

I remember these words of my parents: “Don’t touch that Band-Aid, or it will leave a scar on you.” We need time to heal wounds—both physical and emotional. It will not help if we keep tearing them open. With God’s help and time, remembering that we also are forgiven much, we can indeed forgive and forget!

God says, “I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more” (Isaiah 43:25).

Prayer

Father God, thank you for forgiving us when we sin against you. Sometimes we struggle to forgive others, but please replace our vengeful spirit with your love. In Jesus, Amen.

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