

Chris & Dov Talk Forgiveness

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[0 : 00] Welcome to the Providence Podcast.

My name is Chris Oswalt, Senior Pastor at Providence Community Church. I'm joined today by Dove Cohen, who preached the message this morning, the third message in our Joseph series, dealing with the issue of forgiveness.

And so we are going to launch into some of the things that Dove referred to in his sermon, the things of nuance, trying to work through this very important issue at a greater level of detail.

So without further ado, let's get into it. Hi, Dove. Hi, Chris. Hi, Providence. So I had lunch with a visiting family today from just some friends of ours in the community, and they love the sermon. Great. And one of the things that was also had lunch with Sarah and Jared. They were there as well. And one of the things that was pretty cool to see was just how relevant this topic was.

[1 : 12] It wasn't like you had to sell the relevance on this particular sermon. Like, this is stuff that we have all walked through and experienced. And so in particular, and we'll talk about this, they were, the visiting couple were especially struck by the idea that forgiveness should be extended to those who are repentant.

They had never heard that before. And we're the same age. And I can explicitly remember seasons because the church at large, not just one church, but like it just seems like sometimes the church at large goes through particular seasons of theological growth in general.

So I can kind of remember a period of time when forgiveness was all the talk on Christian radio.

And, you know, you were hearing a lot of sermons on it and there were books written about it and so on and so forth.

And I think that a lot of those books were so emphatic on like, hey, this is important, but they didn't necessarily get into some of the nuances.

And it had the unintended effect of sort of piling burdens on men's backs. That can happen in seasons where a pastor or a group of pastors feel really passionate about a subject.

[2 : 36] They can communicate the importance of the subject, but they can kind of fail to think through just like the everyday kind of difficulties that embracing that particular topic involves.

And so I thought you did a really good job with that. And I was with this couple. I was in the same boat is kind of just like knowing that a lot of the past teaching on forgiveness was mostly about the imperative, the need to do it and not really getting into the weeds.

And that's kind of what we're doing today where we're gathered to talk about sort of the details associated with this particular issue. Yeah, there's a lot of nuance to forgiveness. Obviously, I know you're passionate about you want to be eager to forgive and not just willing to forgive.

But clearly, there's wisdom that needs to be walked out when it comes to forgiving and being forgiven. Yeah, I think I think just pastorally. I just want to always be careful to help people think through the details of a situation.

It's relatively easy to hand a prescription and we should do that. But then pastorally, we need to figure out how do we help people actually, you know, move this truth into their practical lives.

[3 : 55] You know, the rubber meets the road when you're really in the nitty gritty of life. Yeah. What does it look like to forgive and be forgiven? Yeah. So that's what we're going to do in this podcast. And we've got a little bit of an outline here to work through.

I think the big thing that I wanted to launch off with was just what I think is something that's essential in. In really all areas of obedience is the difference between a willingness to obey and an eagerness to obey.

I think that a lot of things fall into line and make more sense when there is an eagerness to obey, not merely an openness to obedience.

And I believe that of all of the things that God's commanded us to do, forgiveness should be one of those things that we're not only willing to do, but we're eager to do.

And we should be eager to do it, even perhaps for some selfish reasons, because if you've ever we're going to talk about this next. If you've ever gone through an experience of forgiveness, either on the giving or receiving end, you understand how.

[4 : 59] Life changing it could be, for instance, the couple that I had lunch with today, she was talking about someone that she was struggling, has struggled for a long time to forgive.

And. But that person isn't repentant. And so we walk. So she actually felt like her load was lightened today a little bit because she's been eager to do it, but she didn't know how to do it.

And anyway, so so I think that like being eager to forgive is important for a number of reasons. One of them being when you actually process forgiveness, whether on the receiving or giving end your your life dramatically improves.

You are not carrying the weight that you were carrying. I believe that God's blessings open up to you often after forgiveness. I have many anecdotal stories of people who.

Were relatively fruitless in their ministries. And then came to the realization that they were harboring bitterness and for an unforgiveness. Surrendered that to the Lord.

[6 : 09] And saw kind of, you know, the floodgates open. And I just think that it's one of those things that we should be eager to do for all sorts of reasons, including, you know, some kind of self.

Some favorably self centered reasons, I guess you might say. Yeah, sure. So let's talk about personal experiences with forgiveness. You can go first because it was your idea and you've had more time to think about it.

Why don't you talk about a personal experience with forgiveness? Yeah, so for me, a dramatic personal experience with forgiveness is really a vertical experience with forgiveness between me and the Lord.

So I started reading the Bible, started reading the New Testament at the end of high school and fell in love with Jesus. I mean, he was kind and true and loved what he said on the Sermon on the Mount.

But I don't think I understood my need to be forgiven or the fact that I could be forgiven. Until about November of freshman year in college, I was reading Discipline of Grace by Jerry Bridges, chapter three.

[7 : 08] It just walks you through the gospel. Christ died for your sins. He lived as your righteousness. And I just remember this feeling of this. I was very sensitive to my sin at the time and very aware of the weight of my sin upon me.

And just remember the weight of my sin, you know, like like Pilgrim Pilgrim Progress just falling off my back and realizing I am forgiven because of Jesus. And he is my righteousness and I can trust in him fully.

And that vertical forgiveness just it was just a weight off my back. It brought peace and joy and freedom. And just so glad the Holy Spirit illuminated that to me.

That's cool. Yeah. So that experience, I mean, it was it was probably it probably has been instructive for you as you've had to forgive others.

Sure. Right. Yeah. Well, I think we're going to talk more about that in a minute. So you did a vertical. I'll do a horizontal. Well, I went through a situation where.

[8 : 09] I worked for a senior pastor for four years at a at a large. You know, growing church, suburban church. And the man was unqualified.

He was he was he was he was unqualified, had a lot of. Angry outbursts and was actually kind of actively working to undermine me and and so on and so forth.

There were moments where he took particular actions even after we left that wound up causing our family significant financial hurt and so on and so forth.

And it really set in motion and probably about a 10 year period of really kind of languishing to some to some degree. God was good. But just going through stuff that we really didn't need to go to go through unless he had sort of gone out of his way to to be harmful, to be hurtful.

So. Somewhere in the middle of that, it kind of dawned on me that. I was harboring bitterness in my heart.

[9 : 21] Toward him. And yet it was a situation where looking back, I was pretty young. Maybe I should have gone to him.

I didn't. I don't. I don't believe that would have been helpful, but the Bible is pretty clear. I probably should have, but I didn't. And so I was sort of left there kind of floating in this state of feeling

bitterness.

And. Kind of rehearsing all of the hurts. That I had gone through at his hand. And just feeling absolutely.

Gross. Every time my mind would go there, I would have this sense of. Just like this is not OK for me to just rehearse these things and. And, you know, you know, I would just my brain would just go into these these loops.

Anyway, so I think I probably misdiagnosed that situation. We'll talk about this more in a moment by probably misdiagnosed that situation as a need to forgive is he certainly was not repentant.

[10:32] That would. I think that would have made things a lot easier. I think it would have been a lot easier for me just to understand that that's a part of this. But. I'll speak to that just real quickly. I think that a lot of people need to understand there's a difference between.

Expunging your own heart of bitterness. And forgiving someone. And I think I was mislabeling things back then where I was was thinking I needed to forgive him.

But really what I was trying to get at. I think God just God knew what I meant, you know, knew what I should have been praying. What I was really just needing to do is just getting rid of all this bitterness and be healed by the Lord and so on and so forth.

So. I just would what I would find myself thinking about it. I would just kind of immediately call it to the Lord. And, you know, if you've ever had sort of.

Almost like compulsive thoughts. You know, you could be thinking something for five minutes before you realize you're thinking it like, you know, and so I would catch myself kind of midstream of this.

[11:37] Often when I was alone or driving or something, my mind would just go to these hurts. And I think that eventually I just kept asking the Lord, help me forgive. Help me forgive.

Just like from the sermon with Corrie ten Boom. I did definitely understand. That this act of obedience was not something I could do with my own resources.

I understood that it felt like God was just taking forever to make this thing go away. And eventually, though.

Never any kind of dramatic way, but eventually, you know, I think my heart probably just healed a little bit. I think that the Lord was faithful just to remove bitterness. And eventually I saw this guy years later and I saw him at a conference and I immediately went up to him without making this choice.

Like, it wasn't me thinking to do this. I just immediately went up to him and hugged him. And he was very surprised. And I'm a lot bigger than him.

[12:46] So he didn't really have a choice as to whether he was going to be. Anyway, I hugged him and then I pulled back a little bit and kept my hands on his shoulders.

And I just said, I've been praying for you. How are you? How's your family? And so on and so forth. Now, was that forgiveness? Probably not exactly because he never did apologize.

But it was something related to my desire to forgive at the very least. And we'll talk more about some of those details here in a minute. Another example that I can think of just real quickly is. Somebody had really wronged my wife. And it was one of those things where the person kind of half apologized.

And I remember we were laying in bed one night talking about that. And I remember saying something like, you know, let's get this off our backs.

[13:51] Like, let's just take this. Let's just take this as a win. Let's take this half apology and just. Go with it and forgive this person.

And that wound up being pretty monumental for us, too, because we were I think it was that kind of just that eagerness to forgive. So those are some times when we have forgiven and they wound up always being like the equivalent of losing 30 pounds.

You know, you just feel better and so on. So those are some personal some personal encounters with forgiveness. It's amazing how overcoming evil evil with good can just be so cleansing and so peace and joy and.

Yeah. Cultivating. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And I think that, again, I don't I don't think either of us would be pro forgiveness unless we both really had a sense.

Certainly not a clear, perfect sense, but a clear sense of we have been forgiven much. Yeah. Yeah. And you can't really read the Gospels. I think that a lot of people that don't understand forgiveness

just don't understand forgiveness because they've not read the Gospels carefully.

[15:04] Hmm. You just can't read the Gospels out seeing this is a big deal to Jesus. Yeah. He talks about it a lot. I mean, we would both agree that.

When Jesus says in multiple places. Um. If you do not forgive, you will not be forgiven. We both agree that that is Jesus essentially saying that.

And I think I think it was Dave Harvey that said something like a person who is a stranger to forgiving others is a stranger to the forgiveness of God. And we would both agree like Jesus isn't laying down a salvation by works.

Right. That you have to. This is a condition to be saved. But he often in his word will say things that scare us into understanding how serious things are.

And and there are verses like not just that Jesus is parable of the servant who was forgiven.

Matthew 18. And then immediately goes and trashes people who owe him much less.

[16:09] Mm hmm. He is really in these in these prescriptions of forgiveness. I think he's actually trying to scare us a little bit. He's trying to stir up a godly fear that says, I got it.

I got to figure this out. So he's very he's very, very serious about this. Yeah. You want to move on to practical tips? Yeah, sure. So some practical tips for forgiveness.

Wanted to throw this out there. The replacement principle. So replacing bitter thoughts with kind, commendable ones. So if I'm struggling in any way with bitterness or if anyone's ever struggling with bitterness, something that's been helpful for me is just thinking through how can I be thankful for that person?

How can I see evidence of God's grace at work in their lives? And focusing on that as opposed to focusing on any perceived wrongs or any perceived sins.

That's just helpful for cleansing the heart, cleansing the mind. Any thoughts on that, Chris?

Replacement principle. Yeah, I think that's good. And I think we have an actual replacement principle that works, especially for people who aren't repentant.

[17:15] Jesus says in Matthew 5, 43, you've heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

And I think that in the case of someone who isn't repentant, maybe forgiveness, that final closure will not be attained.

But in terms of expunging bitterness and replacing bitter thoughts, you're right. Think better things. Well, what do I think? Mostly, the plan there is to pray for the person and to pray for their blessing. Because I can think of some people that I could not be thankful for. And I think I've had a relatively easy life.

I think that I know other people who are definitely in positions where they have been genuinely abused. Yeah. Yeah. And I don't know that. Yeah. This is like when young people, because I'm a big honor your parents guy, too.

[18:22] And young people who have had terrible parents, they're kind of like, how do I do that? We should probably talk about that one day. I won't get into it now. But the first step is to just pray for them and pray for their blessing and so forth.

And that really is expunging bitter thoughts. So I've been very practical in that area over the years where I will actively pray for someone to be blessed in ways that I would consider to be blessings. So, you know, if I'm having a bitter thought towards someone, I might pray for their health. I might pray for so on and so forth. Something from the new birth. Yeah.

Yeah. Well, unfortunately, you know. Sometimes people who aren't repenting are also claiming Christ.

And sometimes I think they really are Christians and sometimes. But anyway, I just try to pray. I just try to pray like blessings on people that I'm struggling with.

[19:22] And that seems to be pretty, pretty useful as a replacement principle. Yeah, that's good. So that's thought in terms of word, like being able to speak about somebody. I feel like it can be helpful to speak highly of people in front of others.

And that that will sow seeds in my own heart when I'm putting out evidence of grace again, thankfulness or anything. I can speak highly of someone else if I'm potentially struggling my heart with them.

Yeah. Yeah. I think that the. Most of the texts about forgiveness in the epistles have to do with just sort of brotherly offenses there.

They're they just have to do with not getting prickly with each other and, you know, bearing with one another and so forth. Yeah. In that particular context. Speaking honor toward another person can really be instructive to your own heart, like you said.

Yeah. In those particular places, it really works well. The other place I've seen this work. Well, this is really probably forgiveness, but. People can develop low opinions of their spouses over time, and some of that might be deserved.

[20 : 36] We're sinners and not only sinners, but we're just incomplete humans in many respects and lack qualities that are. Our spouses wish we had and would benefit from if we did and so forth.

Sure. And I've seen I've seen my wife model this for years where she is just a consistent praiser of her husband in in public conversations.

Mm hmm. I think she does that in part because I think it's just helpful to her. But also, I think she does that to model to other women who, you know, you know, it it becomes in vogue in certain circles to rag on your spouse.

Sure. And I think that I think that she's always modeled that really well. So I love that. Yep. That's great. Speaking well of the person. I think another piece of that before we move on is.

I think we all need confidence when we're hurting. Mm hmm. But I don't think we should be vomiting our hurt on everybody. Yeah. And. In instances that are pretty severe where there's a lot of pain involved, you know, it's probably better to have a couple close people that you can say, hey, I'm really hurting.

[21 : 50] This person really hurt me and so on and so forth. I think at some point, if you become too loose in your speech in that area, you're just reinforcing your sort of flesh's case against the person, you know, and I think that's what you're getting at, actually, with the word stuff.

It's just like, you know, you're going to you're going to either speak your flesh into more strength or into more weakness. Right. And, you know, so I think people that really have had really difficult times should definitely have some people they talk to.

Mm hmm. But also, it probably doesn't do well to put in your Twitter bio. Spiritual abuse survivor.

Sure. Or whatever. Sure. I think you're just reinforcing.

I think people would assume that me saying that is, you know, encouraging people to be silent. No, I'm actually thinking that the most one of the most ruinous sort of attitudes an individual can take is to perceive his identity through the lens of victimhood.

Right. Oh, yeah. And it's like, well, maybe maybe just don't talk so much about it or talk to everybody about it. So on and so forth. When we talk about good thought, hurt not gossip, never friends forever.

[22 : 59] Yeah. I try to be intentional with the gossip, never as appropriate. Don't bring it up and don't talk about it with people. Yeah, I thought you were. So exactly to your point, it can be helpful to get counsel from two or three people to try to figure out, you know, how do I how do I care for my heart?

How do I care for the other person and get wisdom there? Like you said, and have it but have it be a small circle of people that can give you good focus counsel. I ran into this question at a premarital counseling session I did the other day about this very issue.

And I would say that especially when it's, you know, kind of spouse related, but this principle might extend to other situations. This is there are some places where pastors and older Christians who don't even necessarily know you that well are better confidants than your immediate circle of friends.

Sure. Like an example of that would be if you're struggling with your husband and he it's and he's at fault or you perceive him to be at fault. I don't see there's there's not there's probably a lot of disadvantages to go into your immediate circle of girlfriends.

Mm hmm. Mm hmm. And talking about how your husband has done X, Y, Z, because you're going to do life with those people for a long time, probably as a couple.

[24 : 19] Mm hmm. And and and it's like, why, you know, why paint a negative picture of your spouse in front of essentially what are his friends? Two, I think I think in their situations like that, it's better to go to someone that is actually kind of you're less likely to hang out with or someone just more generally jaded like me, where I'm not, you know, I'm not I'm not going to be surprised by someone's struggles as much as like the immediate circle of friends would be.

Sure. Yeah, that's wise. Okay. And then in terms of deed, like how do we practice forgiveness actively? Yeah. So I like the CS quote, CS Lewis quote that Ken Sandy provides in in the Peacemaker, page 222.

It says, don't waste time bothering whether you love your neighbor, loving in quotes, act as if you did. As soon as you do this, you will find that one of the great secrets when you're behaving is if you love someone, you'll presently come to love him.

So I think that's kind of a circumspect way of saying, obey the Lord. Yeah. Like if you can't love them as your brother, love them as your neighbor. And if you can't love them as your neighbor, love them as your enemy, but but love them and do practical things that will bless and love.

And that will so love and amicability and just friendship between you and that person. It will help your heart just doing active things to love that person.

[25 : 42] Yeah. I mean, when we talk about the flesh and spirit and walking in the flesh and spirit, you know, that can sometimes feel very abstract and theoretical. So here's why I would describe it.

There's this little angry dwarf in you, this little angry dwarf who is bitter about everything and is looking for grievances.

And you got to kill the dwarf. You got to you got to starve the dwarf, man. And there's another part of you that is, you know, kind. And that's the Holy Spirit. And and, you know, see us or a Spurgeon did a sermon on the flesh and the spirit as being two dogs in his heart.

Sure. And afterward, the congregation member said, well, which dog wins? And Spurgeon said, whichever one I feed. Mm hmm. Mm hmm. And I think a lot of what we're talking about with forgiveness and bitterness, which is kind of adjacent, is you got to kill out a little angry, you know, scorekeeping dwarf inside of you.

That is a small person, vengeful, dark. And you got to like you got to you got to make sure that that doesn't get more food. And so a lot of your prescriptions, I think, are essentially about starving the dwarf.

[26 : 58] I would say starve the dwarf. Love it. Starve the dwarf. Oh, hey, I wanted to ask you on the quote you provided, the Sandy book. Yeah.

Quote there. And I had not heard about this other book that you had you had cited. Yeah. So tell me about that one. Unpacking Forgiveness by Chris Braun. I'm actually going to put a base camp link to it along with the Ken Sandy book, along with an experience in God's Forgiveness book later today.

But this Chris Braun book, it's just very thoroughly walk you through. What does it mean when God forgives you and it gives you the definition of God's forgiveness? And then it applies it to, OK, then what does it mean for Christians to forgive?

And what does it mean for us to forgive? And it gets into real practical application. So it was very thorough, very detailed. And I recommend the book.

Would that be your more likely go to for the average church member who's struggling with this over the Peacemaker book? Yeah. Yes, I would. I would say unpack and start with Unpacking Forgiveness.

[28 : 00] Peacemaker book has about three chapters on forgiveness. Peacemaker has a lot more about a lot of other stuff in terms of relational functioning. There's about three chapters on forgiveness that are very helpful.

And then also there's a John Ensor book called it used to be called Experiencing God's Forgiveness. I think it's like the gospel at work of the great work of the gospel. I'll put it up on base camp.

And it has a wonderful chapter on pushing past grudges. That's the title of the chapter. I like that. It's just one chapter. Kill the grudge dwarf. It's just one.

It's a one chapter succinct summary of how to forgive and push past grudges. I've got a copy of it. Anyone's welcome to borrow it. Highly recommend it. It's helped. It helped me about 15, 20 years ago.

Specific situation. Just in amazing ways. Just going to push past grudges. Forgive. Forgive. And like you said, be eager to forgive, not just willing to forgive. Yeah. And again, this is one of those.

[29 : 00] There are certain disciplines we can or certain obediences we can recommend like very clear conscience wise, knowing that if you'll just do this, you'll be blessed. Yes. Yeah. And this is one of those things.

Yes. So, okay. So, again, from my lunch today at Moonwalk, by the way, at the Kung Pao Chicken. Nice. Have you guys frequented that place since moving nearby?

We went to Moonwalk on Christmas. Christine wasn't feeling great. And so she was like, Dove, I could go for some Chinese food. That would just be easier.

So we went with the traditional Jewish route for Christmas. I was going to say, that is. And we got Chinese food at Moonwalk. Yes. It was delicious. You know, we did Chinese on Christmas, too. I think I did know that. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. So we were just there today. And if you haven't been there, I would say it's kind of elevated bad Chinese food. Like it's not great, but the ingredients you can tell are pretty fresh.

[30 : 01] And the lady that works there, we love to death. She takes care of us every time we're in there and brings out extra food and so on and so forth. But we bring large crowds.

So she sees me as a cash cow, I think. You're the rainmaker. Yeah, exactly. But yeah, we get the casino treatment, the high roller casino treatment at Moonwalk.

But anyway, I think it's the other nice thing about Moonwalk is you get two meals out of every order. Sure. Sure. Like I've never finished. Yeah, I've never finished more than half of any dinner.

Oh, this is a pretty cool thing. Speaking of eating out, the other day, now you guys know I'm very strict with the keto thing. But the other day, I was lifting really heavy weights at the gym.

And I got in the car. I was driving home. And I started having like a blood sugar crash where I was like starting to shake. My hands were shaking and the steering wheel was shaking. And so I joked with my family, I used my last remaining energy to pull into Mod Pizza.

[31 : 09] Because they have a cauliflower crust pizza. So that's pretty low carb. So anyway, I go in there and I'm kind of embarrassed because I'm kind of shaking.

And I order a pizza. Well, it takes him a long time. And finally, he calls me up and he hands me this pizza with a giant hole in the middle of it.

It's like a donut pizza. And he's like, so here's the thing. We're not sure how this happened, but that part stuck to the oven. And so now we have, you know, you have a hole in your pizza.

And he's like, we're making you a whole new pizza for free. And, you know. So anyway, I got two pizzas. Well, I guess, you know, one and three quarters pizzas.

And he was repentant. He was making amends. He was making restitution. I know. I know. He was sorry. That's why I brought it up. It was like the easiest thing in the world to forgive my holy pizza. He just owned his mistake.

[32 : 05] Your holy pizza. Yes. He owned his mistake. And made it right. Yeah. And it's like, man, those are times. Now, I do know some people who would still choose to be angry about that.

Sure. But I felt like I had gotten a deal. Yeah. And I would say that I do know that some people are so.

The grudge dwarf is so big in them. That even when someone's repentant, they still won't forgive.

So let's talk about that quickly because we're really wanting to talk about the other thing, which is what do you do with someone who's not repentant? But let's start here. If someone's repentant, you need to understand that at the moment you don't forgive, you're the one in sin, not them.

And the other thing I would say very strongly about this issue for people who are not eager to forgive is if someone is repentant, Jesus has shed his blood for that sin.

[33 : 19] And you are not in a good position, my friend, to say that that's not enough. Yeah. You are not in a good position to demand more from that person than what was already done at the cross.

Yeah. So if someone's repentant, this is, first of all, it should be easy for you to forgive. And if it's not, it's because you haven't flexed those muscles and you need to build that up and you need to make this a top shelf priority.

This is a fundamental in the Christian life. This is Christianity 101. And if someone comes to you and says, I am really sorry, I failed you. Will you please forgive me? This is where your poem is, is perfect.

So say it again. Good thought. Hurt not. Gossip never. Friends forever. Yeah. There's no retaliation. There's no friction. There's immediate, like, yes. Thank you.

In light of all that I've been forgiven, it is a joy to forgive you. Yeah. And also just in light of the fact that Jesus died for you. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Like, and I'm thinking of Romans 8, you know, who will bring a charge against God's elect?

[34 : 31] It is he who justifies. Yeah. And it's like, you do not want to be in the position of questioning God's math. Yeah. What side? Whose side are you on?

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. That's the accuser of the brethren. Yeah. We did, we did Job in Sunday school a couple of weeks ago when John, when John was out and the, the, you know, the, the material is pretty simple, but one of the things I thought it was really cool is what it did is it pulled in, you know, revelation 12 and other passages where it just said, look what the devil's doing here. Right. He's accusing Job. And it was cool for our kids to be able to see, you know, the, the continuity of the scriptures, first of all, but the devil's behavior is, you know, this consistent. And then I, but I immediately dropped the dad hammer on them. And I said, kids, when was the last time you tattled on your sibling so that you could gain the, you know, the favor of your parents. Right. And I had, there were some kids smacking their faces. Once a preacher, always a preacher. All right. So that's people who are forgiven or people who are repentant.

[35 : 45] You do not want to be the accuser of the brother. Forgive them. It is God who justifies. Now, what about people who are not repentant? We, you were very clear. And I, again, I think this was super helpful because I don't think it gets taught enough that true forgiveness is not really a possibility for those who are not repentant.

So why don't you talk about that? Yeah. So, I mean, Jesus is clear. You know, if your brother repents, forgive him 77 times, just forgive every time he repents. Repentance being a full change of heart, change of mind, change of attitude.

But if someone's, if someone's not repentant, if someone hasn't seen their other ways, if someone hasn't seen their faults and seen their need to be forgiven, I think at that point, it's right to get yourself to be ready to forgive.

Yeah. Yeah. But I don't think that Jesus would hold you to forgive based on the scriptures until the person is repentant. So ready to forgive, you know, tenderhearted towards the person, praying for the person like we've been talking about, but not so much forgiving because you can't forgive someone who is.

Yeah. Because I think forgiveness is essentially a conversation and an agreement between the one who's sinned and the one who's not, who's been sinned against. Yeah.

[37 : 09] It's an agreement that we're, we're, we both agree about the nature of this sin and we both agree that we're going to move on. And if, and the couple that I was having lunch with, they were so new to that concept.

We were just walking through the gospel in real time together. And they're Armenians, Armenians, by the way. So, you know, we have all sorts of, we have all sorts of conversations.

And, and yet it holds up whether you're a many or Calvinist, this basic idea. And that is, is that we, we enter into the new life with God and justification through repentance.

Right. You know, there's some differences there depending on Armenian and, you know, prevalent grace versus effectual grace in the Calvinistic term on how we get to that point on how we realize that we've sinned, but both, both of those theological schemes, both necessitate the need to repent of your sins to be forgiven.

Right. And so we just started doing the gospel test to your claim. You were like, you can't forgive someone who's not repentant. And we're like, is that true of God? Is that true of us and God?

[38 : 22] And then we talked about first John, if anyone sins, if anyone confesses sins, God is faithful and just to forgive them and so on and so forth. And so, yeah, it holds up.

I mean, your, your statement holds up at that's, that's the way that that's the way that scripture presents it. You mentioned the 70 times seven thing. Yeah.

And I did think about one thing that has come up multiple times in my life. And that is, is that just because someone's repentant doesn't mean that they're not going to repeat that behavior. Yeah. And that's, that's inherent in the text because Jesus says they have to repent, but even if they repent 70 times seven, you have to forgive them.

Yeah. And walking with that person, being patient for bearing with each other, just, and remembering how much God, again, how much God has forgiven me, how much God has forgiven us.

[39 : 17] Um, like there, there are things in my life that I am working on and growing in, uh, but I'm confessing to the Lord, um, you know, in my devotions in the morning and it's like, Hey God, it's, it's me again.

It's dove again. And it's, it's this again, I need your forgiveness and, uh, whether it be fear of man or, um, or bitterness or anger or anything like that, you know, just opportunities to receive God's forgiveness and his patience with me.

And then remembering that patience that he has with me, like it gives me hope as I grow. And I, as I, as I repent of those things, hope for not only forgiving the person, bearing with that person, but then trusting that God can, um, change that person as well and help that person too.

Yeah. And I do have some practical advice for people dealing with particular sins that tend to be habitual and hard to overcome. Um, so first of all, let's establish that Jesus has really made that clear for us that we are supposed to forgive someone who keeps repenting, um, after failing.

Okay. Sure. And then let's establish that there are certain categories of sins where that can become that you will experience that in your life.

[40 : 28] Someone will sin against you in the same way multiple times. Mm hmm. And you'll be tempted to question their repentance. And you'll also be struggling to know how to build a relationship with, of trust with someone in that context.

So one of the things I'd say is that repentance and trust or forgiveness and trust are not the same thing. Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Uh, and, and, and, you know, I don't know if you did this ever, but when I was a, just a punk teenager, I would sometimes manipulate my parents by saying, why don't you trust me?

Mm hmm. And there are some, the, the, the correct answer there would have been like, cause you don't deserve to be trusted. Like, like we forgive you, but we're not, you know, um, so, so that's one thing, you know, don't, don't gaslight yourself or let someone else gaslight you into thinking that forgiveness equals trust.

You, you talked about that with forgetfulness. You said forgiveness is not forgetting, you know, it's the same kind of idea. Yeah. Yeah. You still, you still remember this in, uh, in the sense that it's still, it's still in your head in the sense that God, in order to help me with my sin, it's not like he, it's like, it's completely.

Like if you confess, if you confess to him tomorrow, he's like, wait, this is the first I've heard of this stuff. He doesn't have amnesia in the same way. We don't, God doesn't call us to have amnesia. Um, but if we're remembering the sin, it's to help the person, uh, it's to care for them, it's to be kind towards them, um, and to bless them in some way.

[42 : 02] Um, but yeah, I mean, we, we don't necessarily remember, we, we still remember the sin and yes, extending wise trust. Yeah. Like what you're saying, um, Stephen Covey, speed of trust, talking about extending wise trust.

Um, you want to, you want to step on rocks that, you know, aren't necessarily going to sink in your behavior, um, as an analogy. So if someone has sinned against you, um, you don't, you just want to extend wise trust with them and, and be careful in, in, in the relationship with them.

So the way that I would handle that in a particular situation, like where someone has repeatedly struggled with anger and suppose your husband has repeatedly struggled with anger and he's pretty quick to apologize.

And he really is repentant, but he's still struggling. Sure. I think the way that I would handle that is first of all, I'd be like, I'd be like, okay, this is obviously a temptation for him.

So how do I help him with this temptation, taking breaks and conversation? Um, you know, just, just things like that. But the other thing is, is that at some point I do think that repentance will show up in what I tend to refer to as innovation, but you could also talk about as amputation.

[43 : 18] Jesus says, if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off. And that's the amputation principle in biblical counseling. And it's just basically, I think more than anything, a test of someone's repentance, um, a biblical test.

It's not contrived or artificial. And there's certainly tons of, you know, room within this category to give people freedom of expression. But the basic idea is, is like, you know, if you, you know, you're struggling with anger repeatedly and I do forgive you, but have you ever read a book on anger? Have you ever sought counsel on anger? And so I think there's a reasonable kind of way to say, listen, I'm with you. I'm not, I'm not, um, you know, I'm not going to bring this up all the time, but if you really do want to get rid of this sin, are you doing things to get rid of this sin?

Yeah. Yeah. And that, you know, there's other areas like that, like pornography addiction and so on and so forth, where it's kind of like, okay, I appreciate that you are repentant and I believe you.

But I do think that some of the fruits of repentance are, are, um, you know, like, I guess you could say innovation or making an effort or something like that.

[44 : 35] Does that make sense? Yeah. Yeah. Showing, bearing fruit with repentance, showing, you know, cutting off and being willing to cut off the things that are keeping you, that are standing between you and the Lord and between fellowship with other believers.

I thought of, uh, I thought of this, this passage in second Corinthians seven, when you were talking about forgiveness, because, you know, Paul, Paul really hammers the Corinthians in the first chapter or the first book, and you know, it bothered him, you know, that he was grieved and so on and so forth.

But in, uh, in second Corinthians seven, he, he actually writes to them and said, and thanks them for their response. And essentially he's saying, I think he's saying essentially you had the opportunity to choose a worldly form of grief.

This is going to tie in by the way, to talk about forgiving self. Okay. Um, but you had an opportunity to form a worldly form of grief, which is death and pure regret, but, but instead you chose a godly form of grief.

And he says, um, in verse eight of chapter seven, second Corinthians for, even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it though. I did regret it for, I see that the letter grieved you though only for a while.

[45 : 55] Verse nine, as it is, I rejoice not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting for you felt a godly grief. So here's a good, we're going to talk about, uh, just, I'm just going to give you a good diagnostic for how do I know someone's actually repentant, um, on, in an area of habitual sin.

I rejoice not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting for you felt a godly grief so that you suffered no loss through us. Verse 10 for godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret.

Whereas worldly grief produces death. And then he says, this was the fruit of their repentance. See what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourself, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment at every point you proved yourself innocent in the matter.

So I think if you're, if you're walking with someone who, you know, has a habitual sin problem, um, um, first of all, praise God that you're, you'll love them and that you'll be patient with them.

And Jesus's command to you is to forgive them 70 times seven. If they're repentant. I also think don't be a doormat in the sense that you are not being helpful and you're sort of helping people absolve their consciences.

[47 : 15] Um, prematurely, I guess you might say, I think there's a way to say something like this, you know, dear, I thank you that you apologize for losing your temper.

You lose your temper a lot and I'm eager to forgive you, but I want to make sure that like you understand that there's things you could do that could make this better.

And I would love to hear kind of, you just come up with a plan for what you think would make this better. Uh, I think a way that would not be good is to say, honey, thank you, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

I want you to know there are things you could do to make this better. Here are those things, you know, leave it in their court. Uh, let them, let them think about it and let them come back and say, yeah, you're right.

I do want to get this done. I want to get this out of my life. And yeah, there are some things, here's some things I have in mind to do. That's good. Get the buy-in. Yeah. Get the person emotionally and spiritually invested in it.

[48 : 11] Yeah. Yeah. And that's not an immediate shortcut to trust, but it is the pathway to trust. Because when you see someone making, you know, extraordinary efforts, embarrassing efforts, costly efforts, time consuming efforts, so forth, it certainly gives you a lot more hope.

Yeah. Yeah. And they're taking the steps towards repenting. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. That's good. And also like, if you're thinking to yourself ever, am I really repentant about something? I think that's usually the way that you can see whether you are not good at that passage in 2 Corinthians 7, 10 and just be like, okay, is my repentance producing like zeal?

Am I making efforts in this area? And it doesn't mean you'll fix it right away, but that's the pathway to fixing it. That's good. That's good. All right. So, yeah, we hear this.

We're talking about forgiving ourselves real quick. We've heard that a lot over the last 20 years. Is there any validity to forgiving yourself? Yeah, I would say no.

I mean, I can understand the feeling. I can understand the sentiment. But ultimately, I think I have to measure myself up against the cross and say, you know, my sin caused the death of the son of God.

[49 : 30] And any other sin is so small in comparison to that, that it's just going to be my pride, which is going to say that I feel like I need to forgive myself.

I need God's forgiveness. I need the forgiveness of others. Yeah. So that's where I would lean and land on that topic.

I think people certainly do sin against themselves and sin against their bodies. Paul talks about that in 1 Corinthians. And so, you know, there's a level at which you do yourself real harm.

Peter says to abstain from the passions of the flesh that wage war against your soul. So there's definitely a sense in which you hurt yourself. But there's really never a sense in which you do so without your own consent.

Right. You did that. You did that knowingly. I think what people are after when they talk about forgiving themselves is something real and something good. And I think it goes back to this passage where Paul says that worldly grief produces regret and death.

[50 : 32] And I think when some people talk about forgiving themselves, what they're really trying to deal with is just these deep feelings of regret they have for their past life, their past choices, and so on and so forth.

So we would just say that technically that's not forgiving yourself. That's not what's going on there.

Right. What you need to do is look at this passage and just say, okay, the grief that leads to death is like its main ingredient is regret.

And we've certainly met people who, gosh, I mean, as I get older, this is a more of a common problem for myself where you look back and wish you had done this or that differently and so on and so forth.

And I think that that's just a dead end. I don't think that regret is a useful way of accommodating new light. I think a brief sense of, boy, I was wrong.

Thank you for showing me the right and so on. I think when people talk about forgiving themselves, you know, I would correct them. I would say, well, that's not quite right.

[51 : 48] But are you talking about this? Do you find yourself in moments alone looking back at your bad choices and wishing you had done differently?

Do you find yourself beating yourself up over this or that thing? And then I would just, like you said, I just point them to Jesus and say, he got beaten up already for you. Right. Right.

And this goes back to this, what is kind of a Roman Catholic era of just week after week re-crucifying Jesus. Mm-hmm.

And he first tells us explicitly that's not possible. And it's this idea of, like, ultimately your regret is unbelief in the perfect sacrifice of Jesus.

Yeah. Yeah. And the place you got to go isn't to rehearse your foolishness back in your 20s or whatever. The place you got to go is to go to the cross and understand, like, he suffered for this.

[52 : 47] He really suffered for this. Now, as you mentioned in the sermon, forgiveness isn't the removal of consequences.

Right. And people that are walking with others, like, there's still going to probably be consequences. I thought the Corrie ten Boom story was interesting because I thought, you know, that dude could probably have been brought up on Nurnberg charges.

Sure. Sure. Sure. He possibly could have been executed in the Nurnberg trials. My sense is he probably would have been.

I don't know what the line was there. Sure. I think that was a lot of pressure on, you know, your involvement in the Holocaust. And, you know, I know there was a line. By the way, have you ever watched that movie? The Gregory Peck Nurnberg trials movie?

No, I haven't. It's emotional. As you might imagine. Can I show it? Family night movie night. Friday night. Can I show your kids a Holocaust movie? No. A couple of years.

[53 : 47] Anyway. No, I don't think it's violent or anything. I think they just fall asleep, actually. It's just dialogue, you know. Well, will I say it? Yeah. Well, if you're mature. Friday night.

Sometimes take a nap. Yeah. No. But that's a crazy movie because it's really related to a group of people who, for the most part, were not repentant. Sure. And it's just crazy to watch.

Yeah. To watch that unfold. That whole situation. I don't remember the years for the Nurnberg trial. But, you know, it was far enough down the road for everybody to have just an absolute.

The anger had moved into kind of a national brokenness everywhere. All over Europe and in America that this had occurred. Mm-hmm. And this scandal, this demoralization of the evil and so on and so forth.

And so I think the Nurnberg trials actually served the West as a sort of way of metting out justice. Uh-huh. You know. Sure. Anyway. Sure.

[54 : 49] But, yeah, I was thinking about Corrie ten Boom and the guard. I was like, you know, it would not be inappropriate to say, I forgive you, embrace, and also call the authorities.

Yeah. Yeah. There are consequences to our actions. Yeah. And I probably wouldn't have done that. But the point is, is like, it's very possible that he might have to face consequences for his sins.

Mm-hmm. It's just that insofar as you have the ability, you are going to love that person and walk with them and so forth.

Right. So, yeah, that was, I don't know why I started thinking about that. Sorry. No, that was good. And that all relates to the Chris Braun definition where you, the moral liability, you forgive graciously, you pardon graciously, but not without consequences.

Yeah. Yeah. I think he touched upon that really well in his book. Yeah. And I do think that there's a little bit of taste of some of this stuff. Again, this is a nuanced issue. That's why we're going to do an hour-long podcast on it.

[55 : 53] But the two instances, Jesus and Stephen, Father, forgive them, they know not what they do. Yeah. Yeah. It's kind of like they did and they didn't know.

And they were not repentant in that case. And they, and Jesus, neither Jesus or Stephen were forgiving them. Right. They were interceding for them. They were asking God to forgive them.

Mm-hmm. Because ultimately the consequences of their sin was going to be so horrific that both men saw clearly that an angry God was awaiting these men upon their death.

Yeah. And it's like, I think there's probably something about an eagerness to forgive, even with people that are unrepentant, where you're secretly rooting that they don't get the worst of it.

Right. Because you know what's going to await them. Right. On the other side. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

So there's, I think there's even a part of that that's like, you know, I can think of some really heinous, terrible sins that I think should be a result in immediate execution.

[56 : 56] Sure. But I would want to share the gospel with them first. Yeah. Yeah. I wouldn't want them to, I wouldn't want them to go to hell.

I, they may deserve it. No, they would, they would deserve it. Mm-hmm. But I would also hope that, you know, give me, give me a week to share the gospel with these people.

We'll kill them in a week, but give me a week. Just because I think that that's sort of another way that my heart's been encouraged to forgive people is I, and you brought this up in the sermon, I thought this was one of your best exegetical points.

Because I'm not God. I'm not God. I, I don't, it's not, vengeance is not mine. Mm-hmm. Vindication is, is, is the Lord's as well.

And so I think sometimes when you, when you're encountering someone who's really not repentant, you kind of, you're, you're struggling with anger, you're struggling with bitterness.

[57 : 58] But at the same time, you're like, man, I, I can't, I can't root for you to go to hell. Right. I, I want you to, you know, I, I want you to know Christ.

And so. Right. I think even just praying for their salvation at that point is, gets us back to some of the stuff we were talking about before. Yeah, being a vessel of mercy. Yeah. Yeah.

Someone asked me the other day, it was sort of like they imagined I was on my deathbed or something. They asked me like, what's your one encapsulated central piece of wisdom that you would, you know, what's your bumper sticker?

Mm-hmm. And I just said, I said, be an instrument of mercy. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. You'll, you'll love your life. Mm-hmm. Um, if you practice mercy for decades and.

That's good. Um, you will, you will never regret that. It will, it is, it opens up so many relationships. Mm-hmm. It brings such peace. You know, like the Psalm says, or the Proverbs says, I was old, I was young and now I'm old, but I've never seen a righteous, the children of a righteous man begging bread.

[59 : 03] Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Uh, if you can live a life of mercy, I think you find incredible confidence that God's for you. Yeah. And not that you're perfect, but that, um, also I think it's just incredibly incongruent to be unmerciful to others when you are just such a person in such deep need of mercy, you know?

Yeah. We watched Hoosiers the other night, a family movie night, speaking of that. And, uh, if you remember. That has drunkenness in it, Dov. Well, if you remember the coach. If you remember the coach and he was merciful towards Dennis Hopper.

Yep. Like Dennis Hopper's character. And he gave Dennis Hopper the chance to be part of the team. Yep. And he was kind to him. Yep. Um, and ultimately because I think, you know, the coach, Gene Hackman, had, he'd be given another chance.

Mm-hmm. To, to coach basketball. Um, so yeah, being a vessel of mercy, um, never goes wrong.

There are actually a lot of good movies about that problem of the person who keeps on falling.

Mm-hmm. Hoosiers is one of those. But like that, you know, where someone's got a real addiction or something. Yeah. And you're walking with him through that. Tracy Chapman's song, uh, fast car.

[60 : 16] She leaves school to take care of her dad because he's an alcoholic because her mom leaves and, uh, leaves him and leaves her. But she's like, somebody's got to take care of him.

So I quit school. That's what I did. Mm-hmm. And essentially not quitting on people who. Yeah.

Yeah. Just can't seem to figure it out. Yeah. Another movie, not for the kids, would be the movie Silence.

That's about the Catholic priests that go to, to mission, to do a missionary work in Japan, early feudal Japan. Okay. And there's a guy, there's a character in that movie who keeps repenting, keeps confessing Christ and then apostatizing.

Mm-hmm. And then confessing Christ and apostatizing over and over again throughout the whole movie. Mm-hmm. It's, it's a good, it's a good movie to flex your spiritual muscles because you're watching this thinking, what is even going on here?

What do I do with this guy? Mm-hmm. So on and so forth. Mm-hmm. Okay. Well, we are kind of going long here because I felt like it was so important to talk about my, my, my pizza experience, I guess.

[61 : 18] Let's go into just other strategies on how to forgive. You say pay down the debt of pain yourself. What do you mean by that? Yeah. Just absorbing it, feeling it, and then not acting upon it and asking God to just let you feel it, but then relieve it from you.

Um, I think that's how, that's how you pay down the debt. Yeah. Sometimes life just hurts and you just need to not overreact to the pain. Just let it, let it hurt.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And then God will relieve it. Yep. In time. In time. So we've talked about praying for the power to forgive, for hearts to soften, for reconciliation. Talked about that.

Mm-hmm. Um. I think with reconciliation, one thing that's helped me in the past is thinking like, okay, how am I going to treat this person in heaven? Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Yeah. And then understand like, there can't be grudges in heaven. Right. So as Jesus teaches us to pray on earth as it is in heaven, that will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

[62 : 18] And it's like, if I'm going to treat that person like that in heaven. Yeah. I need to, I need to figure it out. Practice it now. Yeah. Get ready. Yeah. Um, and then probably the biggest thing is remembering the cross.

You know, trying to imagine Jesus on the cross for you and then holding bitterness in your heart. I think that's nearly impossible. If not impossible. You see Jesus hanging on the cross, dying for you, dying for your sins.

Um, I think that dissipates bitterness and you just can't hold the two things at the same time. It's like being proud and thankful at the same time. They're just incongruent. Um, yep. Amen.

There's a lot of things that are hard to do at the foot of the cross. Yeah. You can't go wrong thinking about the cross. Yeah. All right. So Psalm 22.

What is that? Oh, so that Jesus cries from the cross. Um, um, you know, father forgive them for them to do.

[63 : 17] Gotcha. Um, yeah. So that's Psalm 22. And then remember our own sin. We've talked about that quite a bit. Uh, but, uh, in particular, I think one of the areas of sin that are helpful to remember are all the things that you've sinned.

And you basically, you basically didn't pay a price. Like there's a, you know, there was this dynamic in my home where I would sometimes get punished for things I didn't deserve to get punished for. But there were also like a thousand things that I never got caught doing, you know? So I would kind of, I was reasonable enough at the time to be like, well, I'm still kind of coming out ahead, ahead on this.

Sure. And I think to just like, again, see the mercy of God and just say, man, he has not called me on a lot of this stuff. He has not been as hard on me as he could have been.

Yeah. He has overlooked a lot. Yeah. He has patched a lot of holes that I've poked in, you know, and to just be aware of how much that's, that's coming down to like why Jesus could so clearly say, if you don't forgive, you're not forgiven.

[64 : 24] It's like anybody who just understands where they are with the Lord should understand how much they've been forgiven and how much they should forgive. Yeah. Yeah.

You referenced the parable in Matthew 18. Yeah. I do believe that one area of helping people forgive would be to be quicker on church discipline, but we won't talk about that today.

But I just think that a lot of times people who are pursuing reconciliation, they're practicing Matthew 18 and then it doesn't go anywhere and the church doesn't have their back.

The church does, the church should follow up and say, no, dude, like you need to repent. Yeah. And you're leaving people kind of, you know, with open wounds. When I think church discipline actually, in some respects, closes the wound and just says, you know, the church has spoken. This has been dealt with. We're moving on. Right. So. Right. Remember that vengeance is the Lord's. He will judge rightly in the end.

[65 : 23] It is not for us to take vengeance. Yes. And amen. Right. About that. Being shown to mercy. Overcome evil with good. I think this is proactively do good to everyone who has sinned against you.

Completely agreed to that. But now I kind of wonder, because sometimes you do nice things for me. I kind of wonder if maybe you're struggling and you're just, you know, well, anyway, I don't really care.

You can still do nice things for me. I'll continue to do nice things for you. Either way. Yeah. Yeah. And again, that that Lewis quote, you know, a lot of this is just stop navel gazing and just do the next best thing.

The next right thing. Right. And just be kind. Matt Perman. Don't waste your time. This is the Lewis quote again. Don't waste your time bothering whether you love your neighbor. Act as if you did. And as soon as you do this, we find one of the great secrets. When you're behaving as you as if you love someone, you will presently come to love them. And then you've got a couple of verses.

[66 : 21] Why don't you read those verses as our wrap up? Sure. So Ephesians 4.32. Be kind to one another. Tender hearted. Forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you.

And then Colossians 3.12 to 13. Put on then as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved.

Compassionate hearts. Kindness. Humility. Meekness. And patience.

Bearing with one another. And if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other as the Lord has forgiven you. So you also must forgive. Amen.

You know, it occurred to me, 45 minutes into this, you know what we're doing? You know what the kids call this? What is that? We're chopping it up. Chopping it up. Do you know what chopping it up means? I have no idea. Apparently that's what we just did.

Oh, that's Josephine. That's talking about stuff. Okay. Chopping it up. Getting into an issue. We chopped it up. There we go. All right. Well, thank you. I thought your sermon was great today.

Thank you. We were texting your mom while you were preaching.

[67 : 18] And she's like, it's his best sermon. Yeah. Yeah. We really appreciate it. So thanks for serving us with the sermon and also with this podcast. I do think on a subject like this, we would be remiss if we didn't take time to help people think through kind of some of the practical stuff.

So hopefully this helps. And if you have any questions, you can contact myself or Dove and we'd love to think more. We'd love to chop it up with you. Yes. All right. Be well. Peace out. Yeah, that was good.

Peace out.