

Forgiveness is conditional

“Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent^{G3340}; thou shalt forgive him.” (Luke 17:3-4)

Strong's G3340 Μετανοέω metanoēō *met-an-o-eh'-o*

From G3326 and G3539; to *think differently* or *afterwards*, that is, *reconsider* (morally to *feel compunction*): - repent.

Webster's 1828: Compunction

COMPUNCTION, n. [L. To prick or sting.]

1. A pricking; stimulation; irritation; seldom used in a literal sense.
2. A pricking of heart; poignant grief or remorse proceeding from a consciousness of guilt; the pain of sorrow or regret for having offended God, and incurred his wrath; the sting of conscience proceeding from a conviction of having violated a moral duty.

Thayer Definition: G3340 Repent

- 1) to change one's mind, i.e. to repent
- 2) to change one's mind for better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins

Webster's 1828: Abhor

ABHOR', v.t. [L abhorreo, of ab and horreo, to set up bristles, shiver or shake; to look terrible.]

1. To hate extremely, or with contempt; to lothe, detest or abominate.

If one is unable to swallow their pride and “repent” with love to the one or group he or she has offended, then is their pride shown to be overpowering their love for that person (and thereby indirectly towards their God in such wrongs as well), thus making it clear that there is no true remorse there in what they had done? This would apply in offenses from heinous acts of brutal murder, to the slightest statement of slander, etc.

We are not called to simply return anyone to their original place of trust with us either, and that is even if they do repent, as they should expect to work their way back to such a level of trust in the hearts of those they had offended. An easy example might be, if you worked as a treasurer for a local biblical assembly, and had spent a portion of the assembly's monies on a new television for yourself, then once caught, and even if there was a true statement of repentance/remorse made before all, should the assembly put that person right back into the same position as a treasurer? No, a wise congregation will gently but lovingly forgive them, yes, but especially when two or more or perhaps (as in this case) the entire assembly's interest is involved, the offender must expect to work his way back into the hearts and trust of all who he had betrayed, and perhaps then after some time (where again, the “lay hands on no man suddenly” can be retroactively applied), a time-tested reconsideration can be made if the man or woman has been found to have truly repented in their heart and had changed their ways for the good.

-dwaine