Study in 1st Corinthians 13 - Part 7

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Preacher: Rev Kenneth Stewart

[0:00] I'm seeking the Lord's blessing. Let's turn to the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians on chapter 13. First Corinthians on chapter 13.

We'll read again at verse 4. First Corinthians on chapter 13, verse 4.
Charity, your love, suffereth long and is kind. Charity, and you, it's not. Charity, not it, not itself, is not of death. Charity, and you, it's not. Charity, and you, it's not.
Where we read that charity is not easily provoked, and thinketh, nor evil. Charity is not easily provoked, and thinketh, nor evil.
Charity, and you, it's not. Charity, and you, it's not. Charity, and you, it's not.
[1:51] Charity, and you, it's not. Charity, and you, it's not. Emphasizing this point, how do you?

Reliable craft to God. Charity, and you, it's not. Charity, and you, it's not. Charity, and you, it's not. How do you sleep? Chaity, and you, it's not. I'm not. I'm not. I'm not. I'm not.
I'm not. I'm not.
It's not. I'm not. I'm not. What it's got there is love between the bread. and of course without love towards God we are nothing that goes without saying what the apostle is saying is deeper and it's very challenging what he says is unless this Christian love exists between brethren then truly we are nothing and that's what John says too in 1 John chapter 4 verse 20 if a man says I love God and he is his brother he is alive but he that loves not his brother whom he has seen how can he love God whom he has not seen so that's the same truth that the apostle is bringing before us here and that reminds us of the importance of it now there are two qualities that we have brought before us in the last part of the first time and I want to look at the first one very briefly and that the second one and I look at the whole video we are told that love is not easily provoked and that it thinketh no evil now first of all love is not easily provoked now the word provoked comes from the deep word from which you get paroxysm
I know that's not a very common word but a paroxysm is when someone is seized in a fit of temper or a fit of rage and the Christian has the love that is not easily provoked he doesn't easily become seized in a fit of rage or a fit of temper in other words it means that he isn't to be touched or to quickly take offense and that reminds us that the word of God often tells us to watch O temper to pray constantly to God with respect to O temper that O temper should be controlled now that doesn't mean but the Christian should never be angry in fact Paul says in the letter to the Ephesians that there are times indeed to be angry be only angry he says but sin not and let not the sun go down from the wrath don't be consumed with anger in such a way that you lose yourself and that you lose control of yourself and you make sure that if in any way you have ever don't let the sun go down make every respect that every change that day before the whole thing goes out of control with a wrath so be angry and sin not and never let the sun go down from the wrath now this word paroxysm actually occurs in that dispute between Paul and Barabbas because we're told that a sharp contention carols between and that's the same word here paroxysm it means to be seized in anger now one thing that actually reminds us this thing really we have to be careful here and I just have the Holy Spirit will guide yourself and myself in looking at these things because this is not perfectionist and in all things we all come strong this doesn't mean that a person who loses his temper doesn't have love and is there for another condition that's not what it means at all it means that these qualities are planted in the heart of every Christian man and that they should be constantly striving as it were to bring these things under control but if these things show themselves in any way we're sensing a person there are evidences that perhaps that person has not come to a [6:15] God at all that's what the apostles say all these qualities should be there in some measure in the person who has come to a village of God but the very contention between Paul and Barnabas reminds us that these things can appear in the Christian of course they can and you remember how

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small the reason for that contention was but it appears small one person wanted to take John Mack on a missionary and get it and the other one didn't want to take him Barnabas wanted to take him and Paul didn't want to take him because he had turned back before and the contention between them became so shaman that they parted one from another and that was a very sad thing it was a sad thing that it should have happened and I'm sure those men often regret that it could happen in the way that it had happened because at the end of the day it doesn't matter who was lying in the sense that we're both caught up in a sharp paroxysm of anger and there's really no need ever for anger to seize you in such a way that you'll lose your place like that because very often grave damage can be done with the tongue when a person is caught up like that you know yourself that if a thread of anger releases you something is liable to come out that you wish can't come out and when it comes out it's like water poured on the ground there's no real way to get it back in a word a word is like that it's just not just and that's why dream says that the tongue is a little member it's a little part of the body but it defiles the whole body and it sets on fire the force of nature it says that the tongue is a fire a world of iniquity it's a little member and it boasts great things behold it how great a matter a little fire and that reminds us of the importance of the tongue and the importance of the temper the temper moves your tongue and your tongue causes all kinds of damage between people maybe besides yourself the other person may be in another and before you know there's a fire as King says it's much easier to start a fire than to put one out now the Bible tells us often to control those temper now you may say well what about a person who's maybe more inclined towards that temperament let's say someone who tends to be often instead of generally well really it doesn't matter it doesn't matter to say come on that applies now I suppose you and I would be for the past a little more tolerant of someone that you knew to see to quickly build up a head as air whatever but nonetheless

God's command applies to that and if you feed yourself more to the sin may forever with respect of the sin pray to God with respect of the sin remember that other people are realizing you and Christian know perhaps by the way that you speak and by the way that you control your temper and therefore it's an important part of your own life and goodness not to be seized with a paroxysm of anger in which the tongue lets go of something that it ought not to have therefore love Christian love is not easily provoked learn progress and other things and as they say you can love think no evil we're told in verse 5 that love think no evil now I suppose it doesn't help when the teacher says that something can be taken in two ways but really this can be taken in two ways but I would strongly urge the second way now this one may be the first way love thinks no evil and I suppose that's the way this is the way that you're inclined maybe most quickly to take it that love thinks the best of people perhaps you can put it this way that let's say a person does something and you can think of maybe two reasons why that person did it one is that the bad reason and the other is perhaps not so bad considerably better well love assumes the better love doesn't attribute our own motive to somebody unless it can't possibly help this doesn't ask us to be stupid of course we know sometimes that there is a bad motive and it's quite clear it can't start but what love says is if it's possible to think of something or someone in a better light in connection with something they don't then think it don't think evil where evil might not be and don't go around assuming it unless you're absolutely certain that it is there now I think we would all want to be dealt with like that and we should all be evil with one another but not to assume evil and of course you can integrate to your own soul by thinking evil of other people not to evil but sometimes you can even become so called in this way of thinking that even when a person does good you actually begin to think that there was an inferior motive for doing good you assume almost that there was a bad peace and evil for doing good now of course that makes a person very cynical and I recall cynicism the cancer of the soul it's a cancer of the soul cynicism and you have to guard yourself against it don't think evil unless you have to think evil but there's another way of looking at these words too and it means don't wrinkle the evil or don't impute the evil maybe today

I hope here I want to remind you again of a word that you've been looking at very recently wrinkle or coping it's an coping word because it wasn't in terms of sin God reckoning your sins is an coping death is it in your debit color is it in your credit color don't don't remember the evil it means really don't write down the evil in your book and it refers to an evil that's done to you or something that's done to you something wrong but this verse says don't impute it don't put it into the book don't keep a record of it in other words forgive it forgive the evil don't reckon it forgive it and as we were thinking last Sunday I blow up it out of the book instead of writing it breathe in your memory rather

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blow up it out and do away with it in other words it brings before us the duty of forgiveness now there's no doubt that this was a problem in Corinth too we're told in chapter 1 that there were contentions among the people he says
I beseech you that you speak the same things that there be no divisions among you but that you be joined together because he says it's been told to me by the household that there are contentions among you now that's paroxysms in a way it's not exactly the same word but it's anger and divisions because one says I am of all another says I am of all another says I am a sea person and another says I am a grand star and in chapter 6 that was reading itself in this way that whenever brethren have a dispute instead of trying to sort it out between each other what they did was they arrayed themselves along party lines and they wouldn't even come before the church courts but they were doing was warning each other constantly to law in other words let's say that someone in Peter's camp had offended someone in Paul's camp there are many ways in which people do but if one Peter had offended somebody in Paul's well there was immediately he stumbled instead of coming together to sort what happened was they were in two different camps to begin and they wouldn't even go before the rulers of the church in case the rulers of the church would be on someone else's camp and so what they would do is they would bypass these courts of the church altogether and they would run to law with one another and Paul is reminding them in chapter 6 brethren all to sort out their own differences with one another and then if they can't be more than before the church courts to be solved in these differences whenever there's any spiritual disagreement it is before the church court that these matters have to be solved together these contentions are tearing the church in color apart all the lines that love isn't easily provoked for one thing and it doesn't keep a record of wrongs for another now
[16:13] I want to say something about this duty to forgive the church I know it is extremely important I'm sure you all pray the Lord's prayer and the Lord's prayer has this petition that forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors as we have it in Matthew forgive us trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us now if you're wondering why you have the two different forms of debt forgive us our debts and forgive us our trespasses the reason for that is quite simple in the idea which the Lord spoke most of the time it's the same word that you have for debt and trespass it's the same word because a sin and a debt in many ways are the same thing there's a connection between sin and death the important thing to notice is this notice the petition notice it clearly forgive us our trespasses even as we forgive those who trespass us against us or forgive us our debts as we forgive our debt in order that there what we are doing is called from God to give us his own forgiveness and we're using this as one of the places of the plagiar of religion that we ourselves forgive those who are sinning against us us now the implication there obviously is this that if we are not for those who sin against us neither will

God forgive our sins now if you think that's a good start you notice again the law is clear when Christ gives it in Matthew chapter 6 it says to him that this is the one particular that he picks up and he tells the Lord to pray after this manner he says pray and he gives up the whole Lord prayer and when he says thine is the kingdom and the power and glory forever and then he takes up one petition and one rule and it's this one for he says it's as as the petition that has struck them for if you forgive men their trespasses you will forgive men their trespasses but if you forgive not men their trespasses neither will you father forgive you trespasses now if you know the first text was blunt or stark the number was even more stark it could be more profound and it couldn't be more plagued unless you have a forgiving spirit to men you can never expect that them will have a forgiving spirit to you so thus emphasized in this tarot that we write together in Matthew chapter 18 and I think the rest of the sermon if you just turn back to that passage
Matthew chapter 18 18 and the parable of the unmerciful servant Matthew chapter 18 now that came because of the argument that kept appearing amongst them as to which was the greatest or who would have the greatest position and I remember saying sometimes there were different reasons for that it was possibly due to the fact that more privileges were given to James Peter and John they seemed very often to be taken apart for certain things and of course Christ had also said to Peter that he was given the keys of the kingdom of heaven and so on he was called that all and disputes arose as to who would be the greatest and the
Lord encourages them and reminds them that not only do they have to go with humility but unless they are humble they cannot enter the kingdom of God at all and he reminds them that they are not to offend each other they must be careful not to cause each other to stumble and he also says in

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verse 10 to take them to despise any of my little ones and it seems that despise his spirit to come into the heart too and then he urges them to be careful especially when they sin against them because that is a position in which it means to despise a person and sin against you or you could maybe try and cause them to stumble if for some reason they are wrong to you then maybe then you can cause them to stumble or then then or whatever and Christ is particularly careful and he begins to describe what you should do if your brother should trespass against you and he says make sure that you won't tell the spot between yourself and yourself alone this refers to a serious fault and there are lots of thoughts that should not enter the court courts of the church and really it's a sign of disarray if you're going to other people to complain about other people nine times out of ten would too long suffer any wrong that is done to us you but sometimes there is something that is so wrong to you something is so wrong and something that has glaring consequences is that you must take it further the lord says this is overtly further then first of all he says tell him this thought clearly between yourself and yourself alone privately now if there's no real love that it won't be private because what you will do is you'll first of all don't tell several other people to make sure that everybody else knows what this person has done
That's not Christianity. Christianity goes direct to the person. And the person then, he says, if he listens to you, you have gained the brother. In other words, he assumes all this that you love. You're trying to gain them and to win them.
[23:17] But he says, if he doesn't listen to that, take with them one or two more, so that every word may be established. And if he doesn't even listen to that, well, he says, take it formally to the church.

Of course, that doesn't mean that you write a letter to everyone that you know is associated in the church. What it means is that you take it to your elder. You take it before the courts of the church. Where is it meant of this kind to be kept by the elders? You take it before the courts of the church. And if that person doesn't listen to the courts of the church, then they are to be a heathen man and a public elder.
Now, that's a technical Jewish expression, which meant that somebody was to be under the privileges of the church. In other words, he wasn't to receive communion.
He was to be kept by the church. But even that didn't mean that the obligation of the elders ceased. It didn't mean that. Paul tells us very clearly in 2 Corinthians that you should keep time yourself to bring such a person further to a better state of mind.
[24:32] And even if he doesn't repent, you should always keep the spirit in your own heart of being willing to forgive such a person. In other words, you never reach a point where you are in your own heart with respect to that person.

That's what you are the same old as in. You must always have a heart that will say, yes, when that person turns, gladly enough, I will be one with him, and it will be a story that sin never was, a story that never been done.
In other words, even if he's not brought back to you, you must always be willing to come back to him. And let him warn you, and let him warn yourself, too. It's something I'm thinking of.
That's good when you do. The Lord says you must forgive from the heart. Not in that defense, but from the heart. And Peter's listening to this.
And Peter thinks that this is a poor order. And Peter, as he usually does, he has said to him when I'm saying he also doesn't mind. The Lord says, for heaven or so shall my brother sin and I forgive?
[25:38] Seven times? Now Peter knows the Jews are old. The Jews are a brother. I don't mean a bit of a rule, but the Jews are a brother. First time forgive, second time forgive, third time forgive, fourth time punish.

That was the Jewish brother three times. And when Peter was listening to Christ's words, he thought, well, this is obviously going further. Maybe seven times is what's expected.
And I don't think he plugs seven out of the year as a random number. I think he has an idea that seven is associated with forgiveness in the Bible. And it is.
The number seven has an association in the Bible with forgiveness. And I suppose he plugs it out as a suitable number. It's going to wear twice as far as the Jewish school. The Lord says, you know, it's not seven times.
But seventy times seven. Now you don't need me to tell you that the Lord doesn't mean four hundred and ninety. As such as to say, on the four hundred and ninety first time, you can then punish.

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[26:43] But he doesn't mean that. What the Lord means is forever. In other words, seventy times seven. What is that? Ten times seven times seven.

Now we read the numbers ten and seven in the Bible. Both speak of fullness, completion, perfection. Ten and seven.
And the Lord says this ten times seven times seven. Go on. Go on and forgive. As many times as you, brother, sins against you.
Go on and forgive. Now that may have said it even more staggering to Peter. And therefore the Lord tells Peter why. And he tells it to him in this very powerful parable.
And the parable really is decided to say this very simple. Dealing with people like this because God needs people like this. That's what the parable says.
[27:41] Now that's so often the point that we forget. We forget that point. And the spirit of God, when it brings you back to that point, it changes the whole perspective on everything.

Dealing with people like that because God needs people like that. Here in the parables, in a way, it's very simple too. Here's our king.
And he's going to a record with all his servants. In other words, he's going to bring them all to our church. He's going to exile. He's going to hear his name. And he calls his servants in the court.
Now you shouldn't think that these servants are just meaningless or those sort of servants. These servants are governors of the regions of the king's kingdom.
In other words, this king is an emperor. He represents God. He has a last empire. And these servants have powerful positions. They're going to have provinces.
[28:44] And the king is bringing them in because he suspects that they're so mismanaged. And one of these servants has brought in before. And it's discovered that he goes between 10,000 talents.

Now, that is a large sum of money. And that illustrates the point that this man is a governor himself. 10,000 talents runs into several millions of thousands.
I don't know exactly how many. I just don't know. Let's say 10 million thousands, approximately. That's the worst this man is a dead. In other words, he's had an acquisition of trust himself.
He's been rather than going on in his own products. But instead of making sure that it goes out to the king in the way that it should, he's been siphoning it off himself. And he's built up a whole world from the revenues of his products.
And so the king, he's built up. And he deals with them in this way. He just says that, pay up now. And the man, of course, is an experiment.
[29:53] He says, I can't. But give me time to have pay. And the Lord said, no. He says, sell immediately. And his wife and children and all he has.

So that pay would be made. In other words, gather up every kind of asset that he's got, including himself and his own family, so that he will pay. And then he falls down and says, have mercy, have mercy.
And I will pay everything. And then the king was moved with compassion. And he loosed him and forgave the debt. Then the very little picture, the last part of the room of the king's presence, when he sees somebody who almost holds him a hundred tenths.
Now, consider the fact that this man has siphoned off 10 million pounds of the king's pocket. He would think it's strange that he would take to do with someone more of three hundred pence. That was our pence. But he commands them by the thought. And demands instant preparation. And the man did what he had done before.
[30:55] He fell in front of him and said just to be patient. And then we'll pay another thing. But he wouldn't be patient. And he arranged for them immediately to be cast into prison until he should pay the debt.

And the people who saw it were so aghast that they went back into the king and told him what he had done. And the king, in this while, took him back into his presence and said, I have compassion on you.
But why, he says, did you not have compassion on him? And so he delivered him to the tormentors. Now, who are the tormentors? Well, this tells us that the Lord isn't talking about a Jewish court. He's talking about an Eastern court. The tormentors, I know. It sounds terrible to us. People who think that the world is always worse should consider some of the practices that were going on then.

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The tormentors were people that he couldn't pay a debt. He drove him to prison. And they had license to talk to him. Until you either told where hidden the sales of money were that you were in a town, or until your friends or relatives could step up or leave him behind.
[32:01] And the talk wouldn't go on until something like that happened. Deliver it to the tormentors until you would pay all that was due to him.

The Lord says, So shall my heavenly father do to you. If you don't forgive from your heart, you burn his sins. Now, what does this teach us?
Well, first of all, it teaches us that God very often records with every single one of us. This isn't the final reckoning that we have here. It's the king taking various servants before taking an effect of hope for living their lives.
God is up with you too. There are various points at your life in which God brings you to an account. It's when God is examining you and searching you.
Maybe it's when somebody you know is converted. Maybe it's when you become sick. Maybe it's when a family life goes drastically long. Maybe you discover to return an ill.
[33:04] God remembers with you. Suddenly, suddenly, you have to give an account to God, as it were, of your life. God has broken into your life. Yes, you're not dead, but it's a time of accounting, a time of reckoning.

It's not in the judgment seat above, but it's a kind of judgment seat below. It's the failure of your conscience. It's when your soul is being searched and examined by God. And suddenly, you see that you're in debt.
And you're not in a small debt. You're in massive debt. And your first response is to say, yes, well, I'll pay everything. In other words, I'll put it all right.
I'll amend my life. I'll withdraw. I'll say, sorry, I'll do this. I'll do the next thing. I'll do that. You'll pay everything. But the Lord says, he's moved and passed away.
He loses death and forgives him in debt. This is as though you're dealing with a Christian message, which is free forgiveness in the Lord Jesus Christ. And you take that message towards yourself.
[34:12] You claim that free forgiveness towards yourself. And you say, yes, this is what forgives my debt. This is what puts me right before God.

Yes, I'll take it. I'll take your pardon. I'll take your forgiveness. In the Lord Jesus Christ, I am no longer in debt. I'm free from guilt.
And I'm free from my sins. But you haven't really taken it. You haven't really taken it. You haven't taken it as something that really affects your life and that determines the direction you go.
You've just taken it as some kind of grant from the king that gives you a license to go on the way you were before. That's the spirit in which you've taken it. And the thing that shows the spirit in which you've taken it is the way you conduct yourself the minute you leave the king's presence.
You sometimes hear of people who accepted Jesus as Savior but not as Lord. And I'm staggered by how often I still hear that phrase. And it's rife in American circles.
[35:16] I received Jesus as Savior when I was 15. But it wasn't until I was 39 that I received him as Lord. Now, I don't know about yourself, but that turns my whole theology upside down.

I can't understand the Bible anymore if that can be so. You can never, ever receive Jesus as Savior without receiving him as Lord. It's just two parts of the one package.
To actually receive pardon means that you are subjecting yourself to his rule and guidance for the rest of your life. You can't divorce the two, but that's what this man has done.
That's what this man has done. He's taken the charter of forgiveness and he's used it to give his own conscience peace and quiet, but on he goes living his life the way he was living it before.
It's only the final reckoning that will determine that kind of man. It will determine him finally because the judgment that they have at the end is the last judgment.
[36:18] When the Lord was wroth and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due to him. Christ tells us that there are people who will appear before him in heaven and they will say, Lord, Lord, did we not do such and such things?

And they expect to be in heaven. But Christ says, depart from me, you workers of iniquity. He doesn't say, depart from me, you who didn't believe on me in any way at all.
Because they did have some kind of claim to be Christians. But he calls them workers of iniquity because their Christianity never permeated their lives.

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It never permeated their dealings with others. In fact, if anything, it left them harder. You know, this man was actually harder when he came out from the king's presence than he was before.
Many of the time he possibly walked past this person who owed him 300 pence and thought nothing of it. But now that he's got this charter, he sees free to grab this man by the throat. But it's interesting that there's no one as demanding of others as a Pharisee.
[37:28] You'll find that a Pharisee is far more demanding of other people than an ordinary worldly person. The Pharisee, the man who thinks that he's all forgiven himself, but doesn't actually see himself under an obligation to others.

He's the man who's most exacting. He becomes a tormentor himself. He binds burdens on people's backs, but he's never really concerned to put them on his own.
And God reckons with every single one of us. And we have to make sure how we're going to make that up. The second thing is this, that our attitude to others, and this is basically what I'm saying, reveals where we stand ourselves.
And that again, it's so prone for you and for me just to look at someone else and say, well, what's his attitude? Well, that's where the other part of it comes in.
Think no evil. Don't be ready always to assume why this other person is doing that. Forget others, basically. Just forget the motive of other people in that way.
[38:33] Think of your own. Paul is addressing these Corinthians individually. Think of your own. Sit down and say, how am I dealing with other people? If we show a legal spirit to others, it will be shown to us too by God.

In what measure we meet, it will be meted out to us. If we show a forgiving spirit to others, God will show that forgiving spirit to us as well.
And so, your very attitude to others should tell you something about where you stand spiritually today. And the other thing is this, how small the debts other people owe to us are compared with what we owe to God.
If I was going to take the ratio for you here between 300 pence and 10,000 talents, the ratio is approximately 1.5 million to 1.
That's the ratio. This man's rejoicing that 1.5 million has just been written off, and yet he's exacting the 1 and putting the man to the tormentor to get that 1 out of him.
[39:54] Have you ever thought that that's what the ratio is? I don't mean exactly, of course, but that gives the picture of the ratio in terms of what people do to you and what you have done to God.

All right, someone maybe didn't pay you something in time. So, your employer didn't do as good a job on something as he ought to have done.
So, your neighbor spoke a little out of turn to you, said something about you that wasn't altogether true. Maybe your wife or your husband said or did something that you think should give you a paroxysm, unjustifiably so.
So, what are all these things? What even is a rumor about you? What is that compared to what you do to God?
What is it? What is it compared to the part that you play in the crucifixion of his son, Jesus Christ? What is it? Every sin you do actually reflects on God.
[41:02] The sins that other people do on you, well, maybe there's one or two or whatever, but not everything they do reflects on you. But absolutely every sin of yours in thought, word and deed is against the glory and the goodness and the mercy of God.

And God's goodness and mercy far transcends your goodness and mercy to your neighbor. You or I may think that we're extraordinarily kind to others, but there's a limit on it. But what does God do even for his greatest enemies?
Does he not pour down rain upon them? Does he not give them sunshine? Does he not give them crops? Does he not clothe them even though they blaspheme a hundred times in the day and so on?
What has God done to you? How much forgiveness has God shown you today? How much yesterday? How often have you done the same thing against God, although you said you wouldn't do it again?
Is there a sin that you've done a hundred times? Is there a sin you've done against God since you were converted a thousand times? Two thousand times? Has he forgiven you?

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[42:07] Yes. And yet you'll put someone else to the tormentor for something that you think is so vast and so enormous. You'll take him by the throat.

You'll notice how a parable very often conveys something that a naked word can't. There's something so vivid in this man. He's just come out of the king's presence. Just out of it.
And I think that's an important part of the parable. It's as though a person like this can actually pray one minute and the next minute he's extorting something like this.
Grabbing him by the throat as though he was forgiven nothing himself. How can it be? How can it be that a person could do that?
And yet we hold people sometimes to account so strictly. When the disciples heard this they said increase your faith.
[43:02] It's in the gospel according to Luke that we have that. If a man trespass against you you shall forgive him. And the apostle said Lord increase our faith.

Now I suppose we need that too. Every one of us needs it. An increase of faith to be willing to forgive. If you don't it's resentment that takes its place and bitterness.
Resentment and bitterness. And that does so much harm to yourself and to others as well. Her attitude should be what Paul said.
Forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. So likewise shall my heavenly father do to you if you from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.
Someone may have done you a personal wrong. And that person hasn't changed. He hasn't changed his attitude at all. You keep your forgiving spirit.
[44:13] I suppose your forgiveness in a way would be water off a duck's back. But you keep your forgiving spirit. Guard it carefully in your heart.

So that when that person does indeed come to a place. Maybe it's years afterwards that he says I'm sorry for that. That you can immediately extend your hand and say it's blotted out.
And like God's forgiveness it's a blot. It's finished. It's forgotten. It's not of course I forgive but I won't forget. It's as though it hadn't been done.
Let's try and keep and maintain that spirit. And even as groups let's keep that spirit. Always to be ready to forgive.
I know that until something is not repented of. You can't just pretend that it's all right. Even the Lord said that. Let him be unto you as someone who's outside. But still be ready to stretch the hand when repentance is there.
[45:17] May the Lord bless our thoughts on his word. Let us pray. O gracious God. We acknowledge that in many of these things we fail.

And that we find many of these things often difficult. Grant us grace to pray. And to learn from the example of the Lord. For without spiritual strength.
For without spiritual strength. These things are impossible. And only those who truly depend upon thyself. Can maintain and keep that spirit. And ever keep us mindful of the debt.
That was wiped out by thyself. And ever let us lay hold of it. That we may be better able to deal with others. Who are in debt to ourselves. For Christ's sake.
Amen. Amen.

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