

Mount Calvary

On Line Bible Study

Forgiveness!

It's time to move on!

June 27, 2013

One of the greatest challenges in the Christian life is that of forgiveness! When we have been wronged or hurt by someone we can hold on to that hurt or that memory for years. By holding on to it we become comfortable with being the victim and we can even allow hatred and bitterness to set in because we have grown use to the hurt.

However on this day I want to share a few insights as to what one should do with your hurts and bad feelings. I need to share this because if we don't properly handle them they can harm and hamper our walk in Christ. Not only do they harm us they limit our view of God and diminish our future.

Listen to the words of the Savior:

Matthew 5:22-24 *But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.*

Matthew 11:28-30 *... Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

Matthew 6:14 *For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you (attitude: forgive because you love the Lord)*

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 *Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (attitude: can love cover it?)*

2 Corinthians 2:5-8 Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure—not to put it too severely—to all of you. For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. (attitude: stand ready to forgive)

Galatians 6:1-2 Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. (attitude: approach gently and stand ready to restore the relationship)

Ephesians 4:31-32 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. (attitude: loving and forgiving just like God forgave you)

What does it mean to forgive?

Forgiveness defined:

- 1. To pardon or release,
- 2. The act of excusing a mistake or offense,
- 3) Ceasing to feel resentment or anger because of an offense committed

Matthew 6: 9-15,

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

- If you forgive, you will be forgiven
- If you do not forgive, you will not be forgiven

Life Lesson: If you want God to forgive your trespasses against Him, you must forgive others who have trespassed against you.

We all need forgiveness from God, don't we?

I want to forgive...but I can't!

To forgive means to cancel the debt.

One of the reasons people have a hard time forgiving is that they have confused the meaning of the word. Some people might say that if you forgive someone that it erases the offense and you should then invite the person who offended you to be part of your life. This is a misconception. Depending upon the situation, it might be entirely appropriate for you to forgive and then keep your distance from that person. Forgiving

someone means to *release* them from the debt they owe you. Consider this—let's say that a close relative owes you \$500 and years have passed and they still haven't paid you back. Their debt to you has caused tension in your relationship with them and so you decide to forgive them and cancel the debt. While they are *no longer indebted to you*, your act of forgiving them does not mean that you should loan them money again.

Holding on to pain, hurt and anger does nothing but cause you stress! You are not hurting the other person by harboring these emotions. You are only hurting yourself. *Give yourself the relief you deserve* and forgive those who have trespassed against you.

Later in this lesson you will see scripture in the Book of Luke that says, "if they repent, forgive them". So...what do you do if a person has offended you but doesn't repent? Based upon scripture that says "love your enemies," it is clear that we should love those people who we are still at odds with. *Could it be that we should also forgive those people who haven't asked for our forgiveness?* Remember—you are forgiving them so that you can move on.

God forgives us...

Colossians 2: 13-14

Acts 10: 43

I John 1: 9

He forgave us for our past sins so that we might have a chance to be saved. He will forgive us for sin in our lives if we confess and acknowledge it. What a wonderful, patient God we serve!

and we should forgive others. *Forgiving others leads to you having peace.*

Colossians 3: 12-1

Ephesians 4: 31-32

Forgiving others is essential if you want to please God. As Christ forgave us, we should forgive others.

...and how often should we forgive someone who has offended us?

Luke 17: 3-5

Reminds us we must continue to forgive when someone repents. *Forgiving someone seven times in a day seems like a lot, but how many times a day do we trespass against God and His Law? How often do we need God to forgive us? Forgiving someone continuously is a very hard thing to do. The disciples seem to be acknowledging the difficulty of this by saying to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"*

Remember that people are human. They will make mistakes that hurt you...and you will make mistakes that hurt other people. Don't be too hard on yourself or others!

Final thoughts: It's Time to Move On

Life really is short. If you are granted 80 years on this Earth and you've spent the last five years holding a grudge against someone, then you've spent a significant part of your life dealing with feelings of hurt, pain and anger. *Don't give another person that much power over you.* Forgiving them releases not only them from the debt they owe you, but it releases you from the stress of harboring those negative feelings. Don't continue to be stuck in a space of not being willing to forgive...it's truly time for you to move on with your life.