

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is not an option

It is not a choice. It is a commandment. God is serious about this issue. It is absolutely crucial to forgive. Not only for others, but also for our own _____ health.

What is forgiveness?

In order to understand what forgiveness is, we must first understand what forgiveness is not...

Forgiveness is *not* just tolerating the wrong in your life. Forgiveness is *not* pushing the hurt so far down inside your soul that you think it is no longer there. Forgiveness is *not* just trying to forget that someone has hurt you.

Forgiveness is allowing yourself to go back to the incident that hurt you. You must come to a place where you can look that person in the face (through your mind's eye) and give them a full pardon. It is a _____. And the cost is tremendous. Forgiveness is not cheap, and it does not come easy. It is a selfless act of love. It is allowing the person that hurt you to go without punishment or vengeance. Forgiveness breaks the back of the spirit of pride. And forgiveness is the key to your own freedom!

Four Reasons Why Christians Must Forgive

There are several reasons why we are required to forgive. Forgiveness is the anvil of Christianity. Without forgiveness, there would not be eternal life with the Father. Christ's death on the cross is the ultimate act of forgiveness, and without that selfless act, we are without hope. Mankind is destined to a life of hell, and an eternity in hell. BUT being a _____ means you have accepted Christ's pardon for your sins.

1) We cannot receive that pardon ourselves, and then refuse to pardon others!

“Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.” Colossians 3:13

2) Unforgiveness is a sin.

“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, ‘Raca’ is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell. Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.”

Matthew 5:23-24

The bible is clear on the fact that we must forgive those who have wronged us. It is also clear that we are responsible to go and ask for forgiveness if we have wronged someone else. God is _____ about this subject! He knows how _____ this sin can be!

*“In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, **and do not give the devil a foothold.**” Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”*

Ephesians 5:29-32

3) Unforgiveness opens the door to demonic torment

One of the reasons that God commands us to forgive is because when we harbor unforgiveness, the enemy has a _____ to torment us and keep us in bondage. Nothing will wrap chains of iron around our souls and hold us captive like harboring anger and unforgiveness!!! Jesus said,

*“Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. **And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.** For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father _____.”* Matthew 11-15

One of the strongest parables in scripture is the parable of the unmerciful servant found in Matthew. Jesus was explaining to Peter how we must forgive;

“Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, ‘Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?’ Jesus answered, ‘I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was

brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me', he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.'

The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?'

In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

Matthew 18:21-35.

4) Unforgiveness will eventually destroy your physical body!

There are so many different maladies that can come from _____ sin in our lives. Especially the sin of _____!

"O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath. For your arrows have pierced me, and your hand has come down upon me. Because of your wrath there is no health in my body; my bones have no soundness because of my sin. My wounds fester and are loathsome because of my sinful folly. I am bowed down and brought very low; all day long I go about mourning. My back is filled with searing pain; there is no health in my body. I am feeble and utterly crushed; I groan in anguish of heart. All my longings lie open before you, O Lord; my sighing is not hidden from you. My heart pounds, my strength fails me; even the light has gone from my eyes."

Psalm 38