

Wheat Street Baptist Church, Dr. Ralph Watkins, Senior Pastor

Bible Study

Wednesday August 2, 2017

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Forgiving others may seem to be a choice, and in one sense it is a choice, but God has been very clear about forgiveness. He has given us specific direction in numerous scriptures, all of which can be summed up in just one word -- forgive! God's Word says, "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him or her, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins" (Mark 11:25). "

God is saying that it is in our own best interest to forgive! He is not talking about what is in the best interest of the person who needs to be forgiven. We are the ones (as His disciples) who God is trying to protect. We are the ones who receive the most benefit from forgiveness, not the other person.

A spirit of unforgiveness complicates and compromises our daily walk with God. Forgiving others releases us from anger and allows us to receive the healing we need to move forward. The whole reason God has given us specific direction is because He does not want anything to stand between us and Him. God's love for us is beyond our comprehension. Forgiving others spares us from the consequences of living out of an unforgiving heart.

In addition as followers of The Most High we understand that unforgiveness hinders our mission and our work for The Kingdom. Therefore we are acutely aware of our need of forgiveness and the need to forgive others.

I. What does it mean to forgive?

II. Quotes on Forgiveness

- ⊙ "The best way to get the last word is to apologize". -- Unknown
- ⊙ "To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you". -- Lewis Smedes
- ⊙ "Forgiveness is not an occasional act: it is an attitude". Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- ⊙ "There is no revenge so complete as forgiveness. -- Josh Billings
- ⊙ "One forgives to the degree that one loves". -- Unknown
- ⊙ "We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love". -- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

- ⊙ “The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attitude of the strong”.-----Mahatma Gandhi

III. What Forgiveness is Not

- ⊙ Forgetting
- ⊙ Pretending you were not hurt
- ⊙ Justice
- ⊙ Condoning or excusing
- ⊙ Reconciliation

IV. What keeps us from Forgiving?

- ⊙ Pride
- ⊙ Anger
- ⊙ Lack of desire
- ⊙ Self Righteousness
- ⊙ Negative Advice
- ⊙ Fear
- ⊙ Rehearsing what happened

V. Review of the Scriptures

- Matthew 6:12
- Matthew 6 : 14-15
- Romans 12:19
- Ephesians 4:32
- Matthew 7:12.
- Luke 23:34a-
- Matthew 5:44
- Colossians 3:12-13
- Matthew 18:21-35
- Psalm 51:10

VI. Consequences of Unforgiveness