

Prayer Study # 77

FORGIVE

"Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Ephesians 4:32

I have been in a prayer/counseling ministry for over 35 years. After praying with countless people who have been in and out of this house, I have seen the biggest hindrance to receiving from the Lord is a lack of forgiveness on the part of the seeker. I am sure that we all have had trouble forgiving people for the hurts they have knowingly or unknowingly, wrongly or deservingly inflicted on us. Unforgiveness causes us to be enslaved to the past and to pain and causes us to burn with anger, resentment, and sometimes even bitterness. Some people cannot seem to let go and cannot forgive, but forgiveness is essential in the healing process. I know that we often must forgive in faith because we hurt too much to do otherwise and often forgiveness, as someone here pointed out, is a process, but I also know we must forgive. It is a command from the Lord Himself.

Jesus told the following parable in Matthew 18:23-35: *Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, who would take account of his servants. And when he began to reckon, one was brought unto him, who owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had nothing with which to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold and his wife and children and all that he had and payment to be made. The servant, however, fell down and worshiped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee off. Then the lord of the servant was moved with compassion and loosed him and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out and found one of his fellow servants, who owed him an hundred denarii, and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what thou owest. And his fellow servant fell down at his feet and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not, but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servant saw what was done, they were very sorry and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou besoughtest me! Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his Lord was angry and delivered him to the **TORMENTORS**, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts, forgive not every one his brother his trespasses.*

Are you frustrated, depressed, angry, struggling, etc.? Maybe it is because you have refused to forgive, and the Lord has delivered you to the tormentors or demonic spirits.

Why is forgiveness necessary?

1. Because the Lord commands it. Luke 6:37
2. Because unforgiveness opens us up to the tormentors, and we have to much to do in these Last Days to waste energy fighting demonic attacks that could be eliminated by closing the door of unforgiveness. Matthew 18:23-35
3. Because He said He would not forgive us if we did not forgive others. Matthew 6:15
4. Because forgiveness blesses you, makes you free, makes you happier, and makes you healthy.
5. Because forgiveness blesses the one forgiven, and we are called to bless others, even those who curse us, in the name of Jesus. Psalms 129:8, Luke 6:28, Romans 12:14

Other Scriptures dealing with forgiveness

The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression. Proverbs 19:11

Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite unto thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. Matthew 5:39

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Matthew 6:12

If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matthew 6:15

Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. Luke 6:37

Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. Colossians 3:13

BILL GOTHARD ON FORGIVENESS

1. Forgiveness involves a positive attitude toward the offense rather than a negative attitude toward the offender.
2. Forgiveness views the offender as an "instrument" in God's hand.
3. Forgiveness looks at the wounds of the offense as God's way of drawing attention to the offender's need.
4. Forgiveness recognizes that bitterness is assuming a right we don't have.
5. Forgiveness realizes that the offender has already begun receiving the consequences of his offenses.
6. Forgiveness involves cooperating with God in the offender's life.

Forgiveness is having a greater concern for a person after he offends me than I did before he offended me. It is using the hurts of others as the basis of demonstrating Christ's love back to them. Bill Gothard