

IF YOU DO NOT FORGIVE!

INTRODUCTION

- A. In Matthew 6:9-13 Jesus teaches “how” to _____.
 - 1. All are familiar with KJ as Verse 9 begins “Our Father which art in heaven.”
 - 2. Zero in on Verse 12 “_____ us our debts AS we have forgiven our debtors.”
- B. This is only part of prayer that Jesus gives divine commentary on. Vs. 14-15
 - 1. This whole issue begins with us having a sense of indebtedness because of our sin.
 - 2. The Greek (opheilema-of-i-lay) means “failure to pay that which one owes.”
 - a. Most fail to pay even the interest on greatest debt of all, to love God as Bible teaches. Matthew 22:37-39; Romans 13:8
 - b. Our text is the most frightening of all prayers!! Literally “Forgive in _____.”
 - 3. Jesus uses plainest language possible, unless we forgive we will not be forgiven!
 - a. Human forgiveness and Divine forgiveness are interlinked, inextricably intertwined and cannot be separated!
 - b. If we are unforgiving at heart, our most fervent prayers beat helplessly and unavailingly against the wall of our own bitterness and pride!

WHY IS THAT SO?

- A. An unforgiving spirit raises up in _____ of God’s love!
 - 1. God forgives out of His unconditional, eternal love. I John 4:7-10; Ephesians 2:4-5
 - 2. Has God established any rules or protocol for forgiveness? Yes!
 - a. As light and dark cannot exist simultaneously, and sin cannot exist in God’s presence, so God made provision for sin to be forgiven through blood of His Son.
 - b. Our text sets forth another rule for forgiveness. That we love enough to forgive!
- B. Unforgiveness is actually a form of _____!
 - 1. You may say “I don’t hate anybody.” You mean wouldn’t harm or wish ill on.
 - 2. But ask yourself: Do I avoid encountering? Difficult to speak well?
 - 3. If so, you are harboring hatred in the form of unforgiveness!
- C. Unforgiveness will take one of two forms in your life.
 - 1. Either will stuff it inside you and keep bottled up where turns to _____, etc. Or will seek to retaliate, taking _____ into your hands to repay the wrong.
 - a. Rom. 12:19 A boy worked with father in woodworking shop. One rule: “Keep your hands off the power tools! They are too powerful and dangerous for you!”
 - b. Exodus 34:6-7
 - 2. A spirit of forgiveness is one of the greatest tests of our Christianity! Learn it!!!
 - a. E.H. Ijams “Forgiveness is not a characteristic to be dusted off and used on demand. It is a spirit to be carefully cultivated until it becomes a controlling influence in daily life.”
 - b. Epictetus “Forgiveness is better than revenge, for forgiveness is the sign of a gentle nature, but revenge is the sign of a savage nature.”
 - c. But it is _____ to have a forgiving spirit.
 - 3. The reality is that most Christians struggle with some issue of unforgiveness.

IF YOU DO NOT FORGIVE

- A. Matthew _____
 - 1. Verse 34 “torturers” –from root word which means “to torment.” (Matthew 8:6; Luke 16:23-24; 2 Peter 2:8)
 - 2. In Matthew 18 the word is a noun, not a verb.
 - a. The Christian who harbors grudges and bitter feelings will be turned over to torturous thoughts and feelings of misery and agonizing unrest within.
 - b. A lady, bitten by rabid dog. “I’m making a list of people I want to bite!”
- B. Four consequences of a unforgiving spirit.
 - 1. You will experience emotional _____.
 - 2. You will experience _____ relationships.
 - a. You will tend to express anger with volcanic eruptions.
 - b. Martin Luther King, Jr. “That old law about an eye for an eye leaves everybody blind.”
 - 3. You will suffer damage to your physical being.
 - 4. You will suffer damage in your relationship with the _____.

IF YOU DO FORGIVE!

- A. You are putting _____ into the picture!
 - 1. Are saying “God, You know best, and with Your help I’ll leave it with You!”
 - 2. It is not saying you don’t hurt, but is giving up your _____ to hurt the other person.
 - 3. Forgiveness will allow God to lift your load and free you to a productive life.
 - 4. Think of _____ sold by hateful, cruel, vengeful brothers. Genesis 50:20
- B. Dear Abby “Forgiving others who hurt us is a gift we give ourselves.”
 - 1. It begins with a decision to let go of hatred, hurt and resentment.
 - 2. Missionaries to Eskimos concocted a word (issumagijourjungnairnermik). It means “not being able to think about it anymore.”
- C. Forgiveness is a _____ (a decision) but it is also a process. Not instantaneous!
 - 1. Our mind has to keep reminding our heart.
 - 2. I Peter 4:8 “Cover” means to hide.” I Corinthians 13:5,7
 - a. To cover a brother’s sin means to be _____. Romans 4:7 quotes Psalm 32:1
 - b. Psalm 103:12 “Forgiveness is the scent flowers give when they are trampled on.”

Conclusion:

We cannot undo the past but can reframe it with _____.

A young man forgave parents and reported “I’ve never felt so good!”