

To Forgive or Not Forgive

By

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To forgive or not forgive: a statement, which resonates within the minds of many of us. Should we create a pit of earthly hell for those who hurt us or should we just “let it go”. Attempting to keep someone in a personal prison, or pit of earthly hell is spiritually, physically, and mentally unhealthy.

In life, we will have tribulation, Jesus said in John 16:33. The Master Himself, our Savior, King, Sustainer, and Deliverer said we WILL have tribulation. Can one imagine? Being a Christian and going through tribulation? Is this possible? You ask great questions. And the answer is yes, unfortunately, you will experience something called “life”. Life is work. And, in work, you must be prepared for the task. To complete the verse, Jesus did say for us to take heart because He came to overcome the world.

There have been theories on why people should forgive, books written on the subject, workshops on the same, and studies conducted on forgiveness. Fred Luskin, a researcher at Stanford University has completed extensive research on the training and measurement of forgiveness therapy. His research demonstrates that learning forgiveness leads to increased physical vitality, hope, greater self-efficacy, enhanced optimism and conflict resolution skills (<http://www.thepowerofforgiveness.com>). He also states that forgiveness lessens the physical and emotional toll of stress, and decreases hurt, anger, depression and blood pressure.

From a theological perspective, forgiveness can be found in the use of prayer, scripture, and meditation on the Word of God. The model prayer, Matthew 6:9-13, informs us that the sincerity of prayer manifests the power and strength to live out this thing called “life”. Prayer feeds our souls, which thirst and hunger after righteousness (Matt 5:8). Prayer can find its way into the recesses of your heart, soul, and mind to learn how to forgive.

Several years ago, I attended a workshop on forgiveness. In that workshop, the facilitator distributed a prayer written by one of his attendees. He was unsure of the name of the attendee, but I would like to share it with you. I have entitled it: “Lord I Forgive” paraphrased: **“Lord, I forgive (insert the name(s) of the person who has offended you [include yourself, if necessary]), I give you permission to take the judgment, bitterness and resentment out of my life. I ask you Lord, to heal me where I have been wounded and to forgive me where I have sinned. I ask you, Lord to release the blame I have within my heart against the one who has sinned against me and to bless my offender in every way possible. I declare you as the righteous One, Judge, Ruler, and Defender of my life and in the lives of others, and in Your Name, I pray, Amen.”**

I admonish you to begin your forgiveness walk today!

Bibliography

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