

Short Answer Series # 21

Why is it important to forgive others?

'And when you stand praying, forgive, if you have ought against any: that your Father also which is in Heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in Heaven forgive your trespasses.' Mark 11v25-26.

'So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if you from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses.' Matthew 18v35.

It's obvious here that we have to forgive others. Not just when it's easy, but, every sin, every day. The measure that we mete, is the measure that will be meted to us. It was sin in the Garden of Eden, that caused every death, every sickness, and every heartache, for the past 6,000 years. Sin is evil, because sin is unbelief, and it always comes between us and the Lord.

If Christians harbour grudges, ill feelings, or unforgiveness, toward others, it will always hinder their fellowship with Him. As much as we may love the Lord, we are told, '..he who loves God love his brother also.' 1 John 4v21. God is Love. That's why He forgives, forgets, and doesn't keep a record of the evil things we've done in the past. He expects us to show the same grace to others, not just for their sake, but, more importantly, for our own. Because if we don't forgive others, it will affect us more than it affects them.

The only way we can ever have release from the things that have harmed us in the past, is to forgive, let them go, and leave them behind in the past where they belong. But, if we are continually dragging the past around with us, and keeping it in the present, then we will be affected by it. That's why the Lord was emphatic that we must forgive from the heart.

If we only forgive half-heartedly, there is always a motive behind it, and the motive is normally a desire to keep the offence as a weapon, to harm the other person with in the future.

We are allowed to do that, but it means our sins will not be forgiven, and they will cause us bitterness and resentment in our lives, and they will come back to bite us. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; it's the only option that works.

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