

We were not designed to let the sun go down on our anger...

We pay a high price tag when we allow anger to fester in our hearts. Anger, although a normal emotion, turns into un-forgiveness when we foster it. If we could see our hearts through a glass window we could imagine a cess- pool of muck in those areas where we hold onto anger. It is like an open wound that never heals. This is true, even when what someone did to us was truly wrong.

Research shows that un-forgiveness is self destructive, as it can create feelings of guilt, depression, tension in our bodies, raises blood pressure, and heart rate, can negatively affect relationships as well as our mood and attitude. Un-forgiveness is toxic to our spirits, souls and bodies. It robs us of true peace, as anger that is not dealt with turns into resentment, bitterness, and finally hatred.

Jesus provides for us the answer to the problem. Through His death on the cross Jesus provided forgiveness for each one of us. He told Peter in Matthew 18:21 that we needed to forgive 70x7 daily, meaning we always need to forgive no matter what the issue or how many times it occurs. He told the parable of the King who forgave the slave who begged him to let go of a huge debt. When the King found out that the same slave had put a man in prison rather than forgive his debt the King called him a wicked man. Forgiveness is hard, yet it's the way to freedom. The benefits of forgiveness are many, including lowered anxiety, blood pressure and heart rate have been shown in medical research. It reaps medical, emotional and spiritual benefits as we allow the barriers in our hearts to be removed. Forgiving someone does not condone what they did, instead it cleanses our hearts, allowing for the healing process to take place. Forgiveness is a choice, so it is not based on feelings. Here are steps to forgive and start the healing process.

- 1) Remember, forgiveness is not a feeling, it is a choice.
- 2) State the offence- Take it to the Lord. Share with him your feelings of hurt and anger. Ask him to help you release them to Him.
- 3) Tell the Lord you are willing to be made willing.
- 4) Think about what He did for you.
- 5) If appropriate, confess your anger to the person and let them know you forgive them.
- 6) Write a letter that you never send expressing your feelings to the person. Allow yourself to let all the anger and hurt out and then release it to the Lord.
- 7) Bless the person or persons, no matter how it feels.
- 8) Tear up or get rid of the letter. Picture laying all of the things in it at the foot of the Cross.

9) Ask God to help you walk in the fruit of the spirit and see people the way He does.

Most of us forget to forgive ourselves. Don't over look your self in the process. We all fall short, so remember although we press toward the mark we are not perfect.

Forgiveness is an important part of whole living by God's design.
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