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Forgiveness - Part #2 of
Offenses, Unforgiveness & Bitterness

Pastor Charles Mendenhall

We have learned that there is a process which allows unforgiveness to come into our lives. It usually begins with offenses, then unforgiveness, which we normally are not aware of and this in turn allows bitterness to enter. These become "blessing blockers"; these things block what God has planned for us. They will stop the flow coming from heaven. God has a pipe for every one of us with all His favor and blessings. But the little things over a period of time will stop the flow; the pipe gets all stopped up, there needs to be a cleaning, and a decision to forgive. Forgiveness is not a feeling but rather is a decision to forgive.

Heb 12:15 "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;" KJV

2 Cor 2:11 "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." KJV

If we are disobedient to God regarding forgiveness we put ourselves in a place where the devil can cause problems. We will have to eventually deal with unforgiveness, we cannot hide it or disregard it, for after a period of time, we will reap the results of being disobedient and unforgiving. It must be dealt with. God loves us; don't let unforgiveness become a "blessing blocker".

Col 3:12-14 "So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It's your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it." MESSAGE

Mark 11:25 "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him and let it drop (leave it, let it go), in order that your Father Who is in heaven may also forgive you your [own] failings *and* shortcomings *and* let them drop" AMP

This is how Jesus forgave us, He tells us to drop it, leave it and let it go.

Unforgiveness usually comes from letting emotions continually remind us of an offense or a hurt, emotions being renewed over and over in our thought life, never letting go of past experiences and disappointments. If we continue holding on to unforgiveness, it will eventually poison our lives and will cause anger. In order to live our best life now, we must forgive.

If we are going to follow with Jesus for the long haul, we will have to deal with unforgiveness and offenses and not let them become bitterness in our lives. The average Christian believer will never deal with it, always blaming someone else and never accepting that it might be them. True forgiveness is not about being right, but doing right and letting things go. True forgiveness deals with the flesh part that always wants its own way. We must not be selfish, never giving to someone else.

We forgive one another based on what Jesus did for us

Eph 4:32 "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." KJV

Genesis 13 tells the story of Abraham and Lot how their hired servants got into strife. They had become so successful in their businesses that there was not enough good ground for all the herds. Abraham realized the problem and told his nephew Lot that they were kin and he did not want any strife, he gave Lot the choice as to where he wanted to go and Abraham would go the opposite direction. Lot, being selfish in his flesh, took the direction, that at the time seemed to be the best, leaving Abraham with what was left, but by doing what was right, God showed Abraham what his blessing was and what it would become.

Examples were given of people who faced the possibility of unforgiveness in their lives.

In 1981, Dodie Osteen, who had been diagnosed with terminal liver cancer, went home from the hospital and began to contact each and every person that she might have offended over the years and began asking forgiveness from each of them. She also purposed in her heart to forgive people who had hurt her over the years. Dodie takes her medicine daily, that being the word of God. She made sure that there were no "blessing blockers" in her life.

Pro 4:20-23 "My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. 21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. 22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. 23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." KJV

If we have bitterness in our hearts, it defiles us, it must be put out of our hearts. Guard your heart with diligence, which is a firm steady effort from which the issues of life come.

Heb 12:15 "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;" KJV

In Genesis the story is told of Joseph, of his brothers, the dreams that he had which caused trouble, being sold into slavery, put in prison in Egypt because of being falsely accused and then how the Lord delivered him and made him to be the second in command in Egypt. The forgiveness that Joseph showed to his brothers and how he ministered to them, when they were thinking that he would do harm to them. Joseph chose in each circumstance to forgive and guard his heart.

Gen 50:15-21 When Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Perhaps now Joseph will hate us and will pay us back for all the evil we did to him. 16 And they sent a messenger to Joseph, saying, Your father commanded before he died, saying, 17 So shall you say to Joseph: Forgive (take up and away all resentment and all claim to requital concerning), I pray you now, the trespass of your brothers and their sin, for

they did evil to you. Now, we pray you, forgive the trespass of the servants of your father's God. And Joseph wept when they spoke thus to him. 18 Then his brothers went and fell down before him, saying, See, we are your servants (your slaves) 19 And Joseph said to them, Fear not; for am I in the place of God? [Vengeance is His, not mine. 20 As for you, you thought evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring about that many people should be kept alive, as they are this day. 21 Now therefore, do not be afraid. I will provide for *and* support you and your little ones. And he comforted them [imparting cheer, hope, strength] and spoke to their hearts [kindly]." AMP

Over the long haul if we are quick to repent, forgive and walk in love we will be in great shape. We must forget the injustice that has been done to us, quit keeping records. Unforgiveness is ugly and can be seen by others, it stops our lives. Jesus changes our priorities and corrects them where they will be like they should be.

1 Cor 13:5 "Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;" KJV

The following scripture describes what God's love is like, how it expresses itself outwardly.

1 Cor 13:4-8 "Love endures long *and* is patient and kind; love never is envious *nor* boils over with jealousy, is not boastful *or* vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily. 5 It is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); it is not rude (unmannerly) *and* does not act unbecomingly. Love (God's love in us) does not insist on its own rights *or* its own way, *for* it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy *or* fretful *or* resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong]. 6 It does not rejoice at injustice *and* unrighteousness, but rejoices when right *and* truth prevail. 7 Love bears up under anything *and* everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything [without weakening]. 8 Love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end]. As for prophecy (the gift of interpreting the divine will and purpose), it will be fulfilled *and* pass away; as for tongues, they will be destroyed *and* cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away [it will lose its value and be superseded by truth]." AMP

Don't let unforgiveness become a "blessing blocker" in your life.

Corrie ten Boom, who had been in a concentration camp during World War 2, her father and sister dying there, saw the guard who had been in charge of the conditions that she was faced with daily. She realized upon seeing him years later, that she harbored a great deal of unforgiveness in her heart toward him. He approached her, told her that he was now born again, and asks her forgiveness of the things that he had done to her and others, she realized that she didn't have the ability to forgive him, but she did and was set free in her spirit. Her ministry for years was preaching about God's grace, His forgiveness and on purpose to forget the ordeal that she had gone through.

We must forgive, Jesus asks us to. Forgiveness is not about being right, it is about doing right. The pipe can't be blocked with debris; it must be clean and clear. Welders put pressure on the pipe to see if there are leaks or deformities, the pressure does not cause the leaks, and the pressure reveals the weakness of a product. We will undergo pressure at different times, pressure does not cause our defects it reveals them. Jesus is a good welder and will repair our defects quickly if we will just ask Him. We will be given many opportunities to walk in love and forgiveness.

At the beginning of today's teaching, Pastor Mendenhall informed the congregation that he would be for the next few weeks taking the morning offering and teaching regarding the blessings from our giving and tithing, but that there was obedience involved also. Many people today are not comfortable talking about the blessings they have, but that the blessings they have are as result of their endeavors, their jobs or investments. Not realizing that it is God who has given the ability to attain these things. The following scriptures were given in order for the people to see the importance of obedience to God's word, what His plan for them is and what is required of the church. Deuteronomy is called the book of remembering.

Deut 8:13-14, 17-18 "13 And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; 14 Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; 17 And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.18 But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day. " KJV

It is God's plan that multiplication is in our lives. We cannot forget that it is God that has done the multiplying and that it is not what we have done by our own efforts. Our hearts must remain fixed on God, for God is the one who has brought us from nothing into our being blessed. He has given the power and wisdom to us that we may prosper, not just set back believing something might happen, we have a part to play in this. God's plan for us that if we will just hold steady, He will multiply those blessings.

The Old Testament is just a shadow of the good things that are to come, the things that Jesus wants to do for us in any area.

In 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, these two chapters deal with what we know as money or finances and how God through Jesus has made provision for us. The religious spirit does not want us to know this and wants us to draw back and assume that we are to live in poverty. This is not what God teaches

2 Cor 8:9 "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." KJV

Jesus for us became poor, just like He became sin for us that we might receive salvation. He became sick in order that we might be healed. He did not become spiritually poor as many believe. If this had happened how was He able to raise the dead or heal the sick or deliver those tormented by satan?

God has a plan for your finances as much as He has a plan for your salvation and healing. His plan is a good thing. Through His son Jesus, He designed a plan that all our needs would be met.

Phil 4:;19 " But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. " KJV

The offering was taken enabling us to give our tithes and offerings. We were reminded that the tithe is really never ours, but belongs to the Lord; we are only stewards of the tithe. It is His way of seeing that our hearts are right and that we love Him. There will more teaching on the tithe at a later date.