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The Power Of Forgiveness
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At this time of the year as we are planning on giving gifts to those that we love and care for, what is the greatest gift that we could give? That we would be willing to forgive and that forgiveness and love would be the most important things in our life as a believer. We are reminded how God gave His only Son, His best gift to us. He truly gave His best gift and He asks that we learn to forgive. God forgave those who mistreated His Son, His greatest Gift and we in turn must forgive others. We all know what it is like to be betrayed, what it is like to be done wrong, but Jesus forgave those who did the same to Him. We must be willing to forgive.

We make our own choices and Jesus gives us time to work out these different things in our lives, but they must be dealt with or they will cause problems later. Forgiveness for things that have happened many years before are sometimes the hardest to forgive, choosing not to forgive, causes death to begin to work in our lives either spiritually or physically. There are believers in the church who choose not to forgive, they stop using their gifts that God has given them and stop being a blessing to others, they become lukewarm and when they become lukewarm, they become critical, the gifts that have been given to them lie dormant and the unforgiveness they have chosen, becomes a blessing blocker to them or a stumbling block. Their life becomes a life that will be lived with regrets at the end of their life, wishing that they had chosen to do different.

Pastoring is a unique gift, a message can be prepared before hand, but if it does not minister to the people it is all in vain. God is so interested in each of us, that He wants to minister to us, what we have need of in this season of our lives. Forgiveness and learning to walk in forgiveness is what the message is being taught today. Believers must become bestowers of love and forgiveness because of the debt that has been forgiven them and that they are now seated in heavenly places with Jesus.

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

Eph 4:32 "And become useful and helpful and kind to one another, tenderhearted (compassionate, understanding, loving-hearted), forgiving one another [readily and freely], as God in Christ forgave you." AMP

We cannot stay in the area of unforgiveness, hanging onto offense, we must forgive.

Col 3:8 "But now put away and rid yourselves [completely] of all these things: anger, rage, *bad feeling toward others, curses and slander, and foulmouthed abuse and shameful utterances from your lips!" AMP

Col 3:8 "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth." KJV

Col 3:13 "Be gentle and forbearing with one another and, *if one has a difference (a grievance or complaint) against another, readily pardoning each other; even as the Lord has [freely] forgiven you, so must you also [forgive]." AMP

Col 3:13 "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." KJV

Paul is teaching about forgiveness and that we must *quit talking badly about people that have hurt us, deal with it and put it away and freely forgive as God has forgiven us. The bible teaches that God blots out the sin as if it had never been, it has been removed as far as the east is from the

west.

The kind of unforgiveness that we are learning about, is not something that recently has happened, but is unforgiveness that we have chosen not to forgive, regardless of how long it has been, but is the unforgiveness that has negative effects on our life. As we begin to understand the heart of God regarding forgiveness, it makes it easier for us to forgive.

1 Pet 3:9 "Never return evil for evil or insult for insult (scolding, tongue-lashing, berating), but on the contrary *blessing [praying for their welfare, happiness, and protection, and truly pitying and loving them]. For *know that* to this you have been called, that you may yourselves inherit a blessing [from God—that you may obtain a blessing as heirs, bringing welfare and happiness and protection]." AMP

Peter is teaching the believers how in order for them to receive blessings, that they should be forgiving others. We have learned the *law for sowing and reaping, the blessing and how it is to be received. We are planting seeds in order for those who have wronged us to receive a blessing and that things will go well for us. By choosing not to forgive we cut off the blessing that we should be receiving.

Pro 15:13 "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken." KJV

A review of teachings regarding the power and authority that has been given to the believers because of what Jesus did when He took the keys to death and hell from the adversary and rose victorious over Satan and all his demons and defeated them with His death and resurrection, then He gave those keys to us. We are reminded of who we are, that we are seated with Him in heavenly places and that the *authority to use His name has given to us. God sees us today in the position that has been given to us through the finished work of Jesus.

Eph 2:6 "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" KJV

*Luke 10:19 "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." KJV

It would be good for us to confess this position and authority that we have in Jesus on a daily basis, we must let the enemy know that he has no right to anything that the Lord has blessed us with and that he has no right to try and hurt or destroy anything that we have, but in order to have this power and authority and be able to use it as it was intended, we must bestow forgiveness for anything that has been done to us by anyone, regardless of how or what they did.

Gal 5:6 "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." KJV

Rom 12:17-19 "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." KJV

Rom 12:19-20 "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for [God's] wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay (requite), says the Lord. 20 But if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head." AMP

If we refuse to forgive, then unforgiveness shuts the door and God is unable to get involved with the situation. Quit talking or thinking about what has happened that has not been forgiven. What is unforgiveness? It is usually selfishness refusing to admit that we might be the problem. Forgiveness will minister life to the situation, not only to others but to us as well.

Mark 11:23-25 "Truly I tell you, whoever says to this mountain, Be lifted up and thrown into the sea! and does not doubt at all in his heart but believes that what he says will take place, it will be done for him. 24 For this reason I

am telling you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe (trust and be confident) that it is granted to you, and you will [get it]. 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

With the power of faith, situations can be moved from us, but in order for that to happen, we have to forgive, let it go, drop it and leave it. Don't pick up the offense again, forgive like God forgives.

Three things to do over a long period of time that will allow forgiveness to take place.

- 1) be quick to repent
- 2) be quick to forgive
- 3) be quick to walk in love

If we are able to implement these three principles into our lives, over the long haul, we will finish our course. It is not the enemy that defeats us many times, but it is wrong thinking, that produces wrong believing, that produces wrong talking and that produces wrong actions. Be quick to forgive. Then our gift to others can be, that we as a part of the body of Christ would walk in love and forgiveness.