

May 15, 2011

HEALING THE HURTS WE DON'T DESERVE

With the exception of pride, Jesus speaks more harshly about unforgiveness than he does any other sin.

TWO REALITIES THAT CHARACTERIZE THE LIVES OF HUMAN BEINGS:

1. We hurt others.

2. We get hurt by others.

Don't deal with your pain and it will spill over into the other areas of your life, and it will end up injuring people you love.

Hebrews 12.14-15: Make every effort to live in peace with all and to be holy; ... See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no **root of bitterness grows up to cause trouble and defile many**.

Ephesians 4.26-27, 31-32: In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. ... Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander ... Be kind and compassionate to one another, **forgiving each other**, just as in Christ God forgave you.

There is one God-ordained means for breaking the bonds of bitterness and ending up in a healthy place: forgiveness.

Forgiveness: a process by which we separate the person who hurt us from the action which hurt us and bring healing to ourselves.

1. FORGIVENESS BRINGS ABOUT A SEPARATION.

Psalms 103.10,12: The Lord does not deal with us according to our sins, nor requite us according to our iniquities.

As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

2. FORGIVENESS IS A THREE-STEP PROCESS

A. WE HURT.

We must forgive pain that is: personal, unfair, and deep.

B. WE BECOME ANGRY.

Ephesians 4.26: Be angry but do not sin.

You can't give to God something you don't have.

C. WE'RE HEALED.

Forgiveness is a change in us.

FORGIVENESS IS NOT EXCUSING.

Excusing says: "you are not responsible for what you did."

Forgiveness says: "you are."

FORGIVENESS IS NOT SMOTHERING CONFLICT.

FORGIVENESS IS NOT GETTING JUSTICE.

Forgiveness is not justice; it is grace.

HOW DOES THIS THIRD STEP COME ABOUT?

Like most miracles God does the work, but we must do something to receive it.

1. Focus on the forgiveness God has given you.

Ephesians 4.32b: Forgiving each other, as God in Christ forgave you.

2. Own your own sin.

3. Report your pain to God.

4. Give up your claim on the other person.

5. Invite God to change your heart.

6. Verbalize it.

7. Extend a kindness to the person who hurt you.

Ephesians 4.32: Be kind to one another.

Lewis Smedes, **Forgive and Forget: Healing the Hurts We Don't Deserve**

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