

## Resentment & Forgiveness

- We are all dealt blows that we don't deserve or ask for . . . but we need not pass them on (the blows)
- Hurt people often hurt people
- Anyone who believes that new benefits make men of high station forget old injuries is deceiving himself – Machiavelli
- Most of us remember 10 times we have been hurt for every one time that we have hurt others. In our account books, we only keep one side of the ledger carefully – the side that records what others have done to us. – Os Guinness
- God has so created us that hidden resentments – even when we are not aware of them create a kick-back of guilt which creates a kick-back of self accusation and low self esteem – David Seamands
- Resentment by its very nature seeps into the pores of our personality. It assumes our identity. Our resentment becomes less what we feel than what we are. It possesses so much of us that surrendering it means tearing away a segment of our own self – Lewis Smedes This is why we must not wait, delay, postpone the processing of hurt (yet also beware of being too hasty)
- As one pastor stated after an apology from a church 30 years after the fact – “I have had my anger for so long, I won't know myself without it.”
- We must learn to forgive in verbs not in nouns – forgive people for what they do, not for what they are. It is impossible to forgive someone for being a bad person.
- It often takes us a while to nourish a childhood misery into a life of adult shame or blame
- We at times build a memorial to an event in the past and plant it smack dab in the center of our living room – and we end up going there everyday to worship – we end up marinating in it – hiding behind the label that it offers = victim of \_\_\_\_\_. You can either live and grow through the pain OR marinate in it and give up living – Dr. Laura
- Spiritual passion cannot co-exist with resentments. We can do our best to claim we are in the right, but the scriptures are clear – the unforgiving spirit is no home to the energy that causes Christian growth and effectiveness. Gordon MacDonald
- The virus of resentment is poisonous and deadly – Deadly because it destroys relationships / Poisonous because it robs us of inner peace and serenity. Its characteristic action is to harden and embitter
- Hurt can easily get sculpted into our reality and nobody can chisel it out – Lewis Smedes 90% of this hurt is people related
- As long as you hate your enemy, a jail door is closed and a prisoner is taken. But when you try to understand and release your foe from your

hatred, then the prisoner is released and that prisoner is you. Max Lucado

- The bitter servant (Jesus parable on forgiveness - Matthew 18) always ends up in prison – a prison of anger, rage, bitterness. We create our own cell
- For those who want to forgive their shamers – remember “forgiveness is delicate soul surgery – botched surgery can be worse than no surgery and botched forgiveness can compound rather than heal the heart
- Forgiveness is difficult – this is the first thing we need to know. Second is that first and often the only person to be healed by forgiveness is the person who does the forgiving. The third thing we need to understand is what we actually do when we forgive someone =
  - 1) we hold accountable / responsible for a real action that was wrong.
  - 2) we surrender our right to get even – our sense of justice longs for a balanced account – but in forgiveness we surrender our sense of rights to get even.
  - 3) we revise our caricature of the person who shamed us – in a forgiving direction every monster assumes their true person – a faulty and weak human being.
  - 4) we revise our feelings – as the frozen tundra of resentment melts, a tendril of compassion breaks through the crust – sorrow blends with anger – sympathy softens resentment.
  - 5) we accept the person who made us feel unacceptable – we offer the shamer the same grace God has offered us
- When resentment is allowed to fester – like a boiling vat of toxic waste – the fumes swirl and spread to frightening proportions . . . often surfacing suddenly with destructive power
- There is no torment like the inner torment of an unforgiving spirit
- You cannot nurture the bitterness plant without tasting and casting its bitter fruit
- In the backpack = words, pictures, videos, cassette tapes, court documents, pink slips, letters, hard drives, journal entries, photo albums, piles of perceptions (conclusions drawn)
- Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping someone else will die.

#### A Healing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I want my heart to walk in the way of your healing. I am reaching out to you today in faith. Take from my heart the heaviness of past hurts, the awful burden of lingering resentment, and the toxins of bitterness and hatred. Exchange my pain with your peace, my hurt with your healing, my fear with your strength, and may I not miss the grace of your forgiveness towards all who have been in my life. Have your way in me! Amen