

Love Life Ministry

Touching People with the Healing Power of God's Love[©]



Forgive!

By Homer L. Crothers

The word forgive comes from Old English *forgifan*, which means to give. To forgive is to stop blaming or being resentful. What is given when you forgive? Love is given! Not love of a spouse, *eros*; or love of a friend, *philia*; rather it is unconditional love, *agape*. Jesus gave *agape* love. Peter asked Jesus how often he should forgive his brother and offered seven times. Jesus replied to Peter saying, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven." (Matthew 18:22 NKJV)

Jesus continued to teach Peter and the other disciples in verses 23 through 35 about a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. He had forgiven a large debt owed by one servant. However, that servant when out and found a man who owed him a small debt. The man who owed the debt asked for time to pay. The man to whom the debt was owed refused to wait and cast the man into prison until the debt was paid. Upon hearing about this event, the king called the servant before him and questioned him about the event. The king reminded the servant of the great debt for which he had been forgiven. Then the king delivered the servant to the torturers until the debt was paid. Jesus finished the teaching by reminding the disciples that they must learn to forgive trespasses from their heart. Jesus did not give a commandment to forgive. Such a commandment would lay down a law with which it is impossible for many people to comply. No one can control another's thoughts or actions. No one can demand that another love them and forgive them.

The Apostle Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 13. In it he emphasized the importance of love even to the point of stating "and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love it profits me nothing."

I want you to see the connection between forgive and love.

"Love suffers long and is kind."

Not to forgive is to hold back love and demand an action.

"Love does not envy."

Not to forgive is to demand that what the other person has you want.

"Love does not parade itself, is not puffed up."

Not to forgive is pride.

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“Love does not behave rudely.”

Not to forgive is to show arrogance and rudeness.

“Love does not seek its own.”

Not to forgive is to be selfish.

“Love is not provoked.”

Not to forgive is to demonstrate anger and be aggressive.

“Love thinks no evil.”

Not to forgive is to portray evil.

“Love does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth.”

Not to forgive is to practice wickedness and reject truth.

“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

Not to forgive is to have no patience, believe only what you want to believe, has no hope of reconciliation, and has no endurance.

“Love never fails.”

Not to forgive is to fail.

There may be something for which you should forgive another. There may be something for which you desire to be forgiven. Both must proceed from the heart. Both must be placed before Abba so that He can lead you to forgive or be forgiven. You are the one who must initiate forgiveness. It is Abba who provides the venue and strength to do it. Jesus has told us not to let our heart be troubled or afraid. Notice that it is we who must not let our heart be troubled or afraid.

Matthew 18:22-35, 1 Corinthians 13, John 14:1 and 27

I speak blessings over you that touch you with the healing power of God's love!

Shalom!!

Homer Crothers