

A Soul-Poisoning Sin Believers Tend to Overlook

Growing up, I heard Mark 11 preached on all the time. People sought to raise their prayer life to a higher level by learning to speak to the obstacles in their life, commanding mountains to be moved. I rarely heard anyone teach on the second part of this passage, however, which is equally important for the moving of mountains.

“Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you will receive them, and you will have them. And when you stand praying, forgive if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven may also forgive you your sins. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your sins” (Mark 11:24-26, MEV).

Jesus tells us that while we are standing in a “mountain moving” position of prayer, we need to consider if we have anyone to forgive. The reason we are taught this is because not forgiving someone can give that mountain a legal right to keep its positions and not budge an inch.

We often see unforgiveness as just an “issue,” rather than a sin. But withholding forgiveness from others will not only prevent your mountain-moving abilities, it will also clog up your relationship with God. He says that even His forgiveness towards you will be withheld unless you give others what you have been freely given.

Signs that you carry unforgiveness:

1. There are certain people you absolutely cannot talk about.
2. There are people that, when you think about them or see them, you get a pain in your gut.

3. You walk down a different hallway or aisle when you see a certain person. And not just because they may take a lot of your time if they see you.

4. You speak in passive aggressive ways or with constant sarcasm.

5. You have very judgmental thoughts and speak judgmental words about other people.

Forgiveness is a gift from God that connects us to the power of His love and grace. The more we experience forgiveness, the more we truly understand God's love and His abounding grace. While forgiveness is a powerful weapon for good, unforgiveness is a deadly evil noose, ensnaring people in a trap of offense and poisoning them with toxicity of bitterness. If bitterness is allowed into our lives, its ways will infiltrate and defile every part of our being, poisoning our mind, our spiritual walk and even hindering physical health. Bitterness will destroy us and our relationships while distorting our vision with a lens that allows us to be easily offended.

The Trap of Offense

Jesus warned us that, in the last days, offenses would come. In other words, the opportunity to be offended will increase. In fact, the King James Version says "it must be that offenses come." Jesus was not doing anything to try to stop it. God knows if an offense comes your way, it will reveal if there is any area in your heart where forgiveness is needed.

"Woe to the world because of temptations! For it must be that temptations come, but woe to that man by whom the temptation comes!" (Matt. 18:7, MEV).

The truth is, what offends you, reveals you. There is no doubt you will have many opportunities to become offended. Regardless of where you live, you will have many occasions to get mad at someone for something or look at them and ask,

“What did you just say?” The question is, “What will you do with that offense?”

Questions to Consider

1. Who do you need to forgive today? Mother, father, pastor, coworker, friend—or maybe yourself!
2. Are you struggling in moving forward with a situation because offense is keeping you bound?

Suggestion: Write down the names of the people you have unforgiveness towards. Forgive them out loud and specifically for what you feel offended or hurt by. You can feel free and empowered today! {eoa}

Mark DeJesus has been equipping people in a full time capacity since 1995, serving in various roles, including teaching people of all ages, communicating through music, authoring books, leading and mentoring. Mark's deepest love is his family: his wife Melissa, son Maximus and daughter Abigail. Mark is a teacher, author and mentor who uses many communication mediums, including the written word, a weekly radio podcast show and videos. His deepest call involves equipping people to live as overcomers. Through understanding inside out transformation, Mark's message involves getting to the root of issues that contribute to the breakdown of our relationships, our health and our day to day peace. He is passionately reaching his world with a transforming message of love, healing and freedom. Out of their own personal renewal, Mark and Melissa founded Turning Hearts Ministries, a ministry dedicated to inside out transformation. Mark also founded Transformed You, a communication platform for Mark's teachings, writing and broadcasts that are designed to encourage people in their journey of transformation. Mark and Melissa currently live in Connecticut.

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