

Medical Science and the Bible Agree This Step Is Crucial for Your Health

Medical Science Weighs in on the Power of Forgiveness

The Mayo Clinic published an article on the power of forgiveness, listing the benefits of letting go of grudges and bitterness:

- Healthier relationships
- Greater spiritual and psychological well-being
- Less stress and hostility
- Lower blood pressure
- Fewer symptoms of depression, anxiety and chronic pain
- Lower risk of alcohol and substance abuse

Angry revenge negatively affects your entire being—spirit, soul and body—according to medical studies. A study performed at Berkeley found that 40 percent of people who experienced a stroke had felt angry or been through an upsetting event within two hours before the life-threatening moment. Another study done at the Ohio University discovered that men and women who have trouble controlling their anger take longer to heal from even the most minor of wounds. Research completed at Yale University concluded that anger can trigger potentially deadly heart rhythms. Severe headaches and many other maladies can be triggered by episodes of unchecked anger, according to medical science.

Inside your body, anger causes a chemical reaction, which results in your blood pressure becoming elevated, your heart pounding faster and your stomach tightening up. Adrenaline is released throughout your body, which constricts your blood vessels and can potentially trigger a heart attack. In contrast, positive thoughts make you feel good and produce

positive emotions such as joy, happiness, love and empathy. And these positive emotions have a wonderful, beneficial outcome on your body, protecting you from stress and all its resultant bad effects.

Jesus told a parable about a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. One of the debtors owed him millions of dollars and could not pay. So the king ordered that he, his wife, his children and everything he had be sold to pay the debt. But the servant fell down and begged the king to be patient with him, promising to pay the debt in full. The king felt sorry for him and released him, not demanding that he pay, but forgiving the entire debt he owed.

After leaving the king's presence, that servant who had just been forgiven his huge debt went to one of his own servants who owed him a small sum of money. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment. When his servant begged for a little more time to pay the debt in full, this newly forgiven debtor refused. He had the man arrested and jailed until the debt could be paid in full.

Some other servants could not believe the injustice they had just witnessed. So they went to the king and told him that his servant whom he had forgiven a huge debt had refused to forgive a much smaller debt of one of his own servants.

"Then his master, after he had summoned him, said to him, 'O you wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, even as I had pity on you?' His master was angry and delivered him to the jailers until he should pay all his debt" (Matt. 18:32-34).

Jesus concluded His story with a warning: "So also My heavenly Father will do to each of you, if from your heart you do not forgive your brother for his trespasses" (Matt. 18:35).

On another occasion Jesus explained that when a person is forgiven of much, they love much, but a person who is forgiven little shows only little love (see Luke 7:47). It is so important that we grasp the immensity of the forgiveness we have received from God. According to Jesus, that is the revelation that causes great love to fill our hearts for Him. It is that love that gives us grace to forgive those who have hurt us. {eoa}

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