

The Art of Forgiving and Forgetting

[Love] is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. –1 Corinthians 13:5

First Corinthians 13, the great love chapter of the Bible, is a perfect demonstration of the cause and effect of total forgiveness. The apex of this wonderful passage is the phrase found in verse 5: Love “keeps no record of wrongs.” The Greek word that is translated as “no record” is *logizomai*, which means to not reckon or impute. This word is important to Paul’s doctrine of justification by faith. For the person who believes, their faith is “credited” to them as righteousness (Rom. 4:5).

This is the same word used in 1 Corinthians 13:5. It is turned around in Romans 4:8, again using the same word: “Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him.” Therefore, not to reckon, impute, or “count” the wrongs of a loved one is to do for that person what God does for us, namely, choose not to recognize their sin. In God’s sight our sin no longer exists. When we totally forgive someone, we too refuse to keep a record of their wrongs.

It must be clearly acknowledged that wrong was done, that evil took place. Total forgiveness obviously sees the evil but chooses to erase it. Before a grudge becomes lodged in the heart, the offense must be willfully forgotten. Resentment must not be given an opportunity to set in. The love described in 1 Corinthians 13 can only come by following a lifestyle of total forgiveness.

Love is a choice. It is an act of the will. When we learn to forgive and practice forgiveness, He rewards us with an incredible peace and the witness of the Spirit in our hearts.

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