

This Health-Related Revelation About Forgiveness Will Surprise You

Research shows people who hold on to resentment take 25 percent more medication than those who practice forgiveness. That's because resentment and anger, unforgiveness and refusing to let go of past hurts all boil down to one thing: stress.

The more scientists delve into understanding how stress takes a toll on the body, the more they realize how deadly it is.

We need to understand that forgiveness is essential not only for our spiritual health, but also our physical health. In fact, some health facilities, such as the Cancer Treatment Centers of America, actually incorporate forgiveness therapy into a cancer patient's overall treatment regimen.

Greg Laurie, pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship in Riverside, California, said the reason people don't forgive is because they believe forgiveness condones the wrong that was suffered. However, that's simply not true. Laurie pointed out that unforgiveness has the opposite of the intended effect. In other words, it harms the person harboring the unforgiveness, thereby doubling the pain of the original infraction.

How do we forgive? Whatever was done to us, whether real or perceived, we "let it go." That means we surrender our right to get even with the person who hurt us, and we put it in the hands of God. Romans 12:19 says, "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to God's wrath, for it is written: 'Vengeance is Mine. I will repay,' says the Lord."

Laurie says, "When I forgive someone, I set a prisoner free: myself."

This coming new year, do yourself a favor: forgive. You will be the bigger person and, consequently, the healthiest. Amid the materialism of this season, we need to try to remember the true meaning of Christmas: forgiveness. Jesus was born for the primary purpose of dying for the *forgiveness* of our sins.

Since God has forgiven us, shouldn't we also forgive others?

- The first person to apologize is the bravest.
- The first person to forgive is the strongest.
- The first person to forget is the happiest. {eoa}

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