

R.T. Kendall: Even Non-Christians Recognize This Secret to True Freedom

The teaching and carrying out of forgiveness has been recognized as valid and therapeutic even outside the realm of the Christian faith. In my book *Total Forgiveness*, I write about a *Daily Express* article about a course in Leeds. The reason for this course, which was paid for by a grant from the John Templeton Foundation, was apparently the belief that forgiveness can be good for your health. Holding a grudge, it is said, leads to illnesses ranging from common colds to heart disease because of all the stored-up anger and stress. Dr. Sandi Mann, a psychiatrist at the University of Central Lancashire, believes that there is a strong link between our emotions and our immune system. All of this goes to show the benefits of forgiving people—even if we were not motivated by Jesus and the New Testament!

Here are 10 steps to freedom as found in the *Daily Express* article:

1. Stop excusing, pardoning or rationalizing.
2. Pinpoint the actions that have hurt you.
3. Spend time thinking of ways in which your life would be more satisfying if you would let go of your grievances.
4. Try replacing angry thoughts about the “badness” of the perpetrator with thoughts about how the offender is also a human being who is vulnerable to harm.
5. Identify with the offender’s probable state of mind. Understand the perpetrator’s history while not condoning his or her actions.
6. Spend some time developing greater compassion toward the perpetrator.
7. Become more aware that you have needed other people’s

forgiveness in the past.

8. Make a heartfelt resolution not to pass on your own pain.
9. Spend time appreciating the sense of purpose and direction that comes after steps 1-8.
10. Enjoy the sense of emotional relief that comes when the burden of a grudge has melted away. Enjoy the feeling of mercy and goodwill you have shown.

There is a wonderful phrase in the Book of Hebrews, “How much more” (Heb. 9:14; 10:29). The point the writer is making is that if certain things were true under the Mosaic Law, how much more is promised now that Christ has come and fulfilled it?

It seems to me that if the secular world is catching on to the teachings of Jesus—even if they are not acknowledging Him or the Holy Spirit—and deriving benefits from that teaching, *how much more* should Christians experience this? If non-Christians can find peace because it is better for their health, *how much more* should you and I—who want to please God and honor the holy Spirit—embrace this teaching with all our hearts? It surely leaves us all without excuse.

The most profound thing I ever hear Joni Eareckson Tada say is this: “I am a Christian not because of what it does for me but because it is true.” We should believe Christ’s teaching because it is true.

 *Adapted from 40 Days to Total Forgiveness—A Journey to Breaking Free by R. T. Kendall, copyright 2019, published by Charisma House. If you are holding on to a grudge or bitterness toward someone who has hurt you, and lack peace because of it, this book is for you. It will help you break free and lead you to a greater anointing of the Holy Spirit. To order your copy, click on this link.*

Prayer Power for the Week of June 16, 2019

This week, heed the Lord's directive and forgive, release and bless those who have hurt you in the past, as well as those who currently do so. Follow the Lord's example and bless instead of curse your enemies. Continue to pray for our nation and its leaders. Remember those who serve in our military and as first responders and pray for their families as well. Continue to pray for godly wisdom and protection for our president as he tackles the daily challenges of his office. Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30; 2 Chron. 7:14.