

## *What Happens to You When You Don't Forgive Others?*



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Welcome back to Teach Every Nation as we continue our study on How to Forgive Other People...And Yourself. We finished the first two sessions of trying to help us understand what Christ reveals about how the kingdom of heaven deals with us on the kingdom of earth about our unforgiveness.

I remember back on that same sailboat...as the week went on with the doctor, she became warm to everybody. And there was a young man who worked there with the sails up on the ship, and he helped clean all of the decks. And I noticed him sneaking behind the corner to listen to when our sessions were on the ship. Because he wasn't really to be a part of that. That was for the guests, and he just kind of was listening in.

And halfway through, we came back from Turkey, got on the sailboat, and he came walking over, he says, "I've been listening all week. Can you help me?" I said, "Sure. What's the matter?" "My life doesn't make sense to me, and it doesn't make sense to my parents, and I don't understand what's the trouble." He said, "But it's personal, so can you come with me so nobody can hear?" I said, "Where do you want to go?" "I want to go back up where I work on the sails." I said, "How far up on the sails?" Well, we went way up on the sails. And there was nobody around.

And we were standing there, and I said, "Okay what's the matter?" He said, "I just dropped out of the third college. I would get into a college, be all excited, and then I don't know what would happen. I would lose interest, and I would fail out. And then I went to a second college, and did the same thing. And then I went to a third college. And in between the colleges I would try to get a job. I would get a job. And in few weeks I wouldn't like the job, and either quit or get fired. And my mom and my dad were getting more and more upset and they said, "Son, what's the matter?" He says, "I don't know what's the matter?" "He said, "Do you?" And I said to him, "Well, does this make sense to you?" "No, this doesn't make sense to me. I want to succeed, and I can succeed, I just can't succeed."

I said, "Okay, so tell me about your dad." "Tell you about my dad? This isn't about my dad. This is about me." "I know it's about you, but it's really about your dad. What's your dad like?" "Oh, he's a big business man." "Yeah. And?" "And I never meet up to his standards." "You don't?" "If I come home with all A's and one B, he'll really yell at me for getting the B. He never asks me about my life. And he's always gone." "How do you and your dad get along?" "Ah, we don't talk much. He lives his life and I live my life." "Do you miss your dad?" "Do I miss my dad? No, I don't miss my dad." "Yes, you do. Have you ever really had a dad?" "No, not the kind I wish I had." "Really?"

"Have you ever experienced anything you'd call torment, or your life just kind of feels bad inside?" "Oh, yeah, all the time. Every time I failed again." I said, "Okay, would you like to forgive your dad?" "No, I want you to help me stay in school." "I am." "You're talking to me about my dad and that's going to help my school?" "Yes, it will." So we began to talk about his dad, and I got a little pad out of my pocket, like I always carry, and I began to write down everything he said. The list of trespasses.

And then slowly we began to forgive his dad. And then I asked him to release his dad from prison. He said, "No, I'm not doing that." I said, "Can you give your dad any compassion? Can you give your dad something he doesn't deserve? Can you open your heart to your dad and let him out?" "I've never let him out since I was a little kid." "I wonder if he's lonely towards you? I wonder, when he's traveling all this time, if he wishes he had not always done that. And after he yells at you, I wonder if he thinks later on, 'I was too hard on my son'. And maybe..." "Did he have a close relationship with his dad?" "Nah, his dad was an alcoholic, and he beat him. He didn't have a relationship at all with his dad." "I wonder if he doesn't know how to have a relationship with you."

What was I doing? Helping him have compassion. Until I watched his eyes soften, and he began to show compassion, then I asked him to let him out of the prison. And he said, "I don't know what to do if he's out of the prison". "Just go up when you go back home and say, 'Dad, I've had walls around my heart about you and me for a long time, and I miss you. And I want you to know I took down the walls when I was on the sailboat. And I wonder if we could start all over again'". I said, "You watch what happens to your dad when you say that as his son".

And then he forgave all the things that his dad had done. And I gave him my business card, and I wrote my personal telephone number on the back of it, and I said, "After a few months, get a hold of me, and tell me what happened." So he did, and he said, "I'm in

college. I'm getting all straight A's. I don't have to struggle any more about trying to be in college. I got a part-time job. I got a raise after two weeks. My life has come all back together." And he said to me, "How did you help me to do that when we never talked about college?" I said, "Because there was something beneath the surface that was stopping your college from working. And it was your heart relationship to your father. And when you forgave your father, all that torture and torment left. That's why you are free to be who you are."

### **Session Three: What Happens to You When You Don't Forgive Others?**

Now I want to take you one more step deeper on Session #3: What Happens to You When You Don't Forgive Others? And then we're going to take you into Session 4 where you actually forgive other people.

And in Part #1, I want to talk about Our Unforgiveness Causes God to Stop Forgiving Us.

And I have this on the flip chart here. This is a shocking passage. It's shocking to me. This is a very famous passage. It's called the Lord's Prayer in the Book of Matthew, and most of us have said that numerous times in our life.

"In this manner -- said Jesus -- when his disciples said, "Teach us to pray. Because when you pray, you get answers. And we want to know how you pray to get answers like You do." And Jesus said, "Okay, I'll teach you. 9In this manner -- this is how you pray. Pray this way." Let's say this out loud down to about here. Here we go: "Our Father in Heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

Stop right there. That's a pretty understandable prayer. Give us this day our daily bread. Don't lead us unto temptation. Deliver us. This part in the middle -- whoa. Pray this way: God in heaven, would you please forgive us our sins, our debts, our wrongdoings, in the same way as we forgive the people who hurt us? This is a shocking way to pray. Oh, man, what? Jesus, you want me to pray how? Yeah, ask Go to forgive you in relationship to how much you forgive other people. I think they didn't hear anything more in that prayer. When He said that -- whoa -- that means if

I don't forgive other people, I'm asking God not to forgive me? Yeah, because that's how it works. What do you mean that's how it works? Well, after the Amen in the Lord's Prayer right here, you'd expected Jesus to change topics. But He didn't. He went right back to this big issue. Because He knew their heads were spinning.

14 For -- here's a reason you'd better pray this and think about this -- if -- this is a condition -- if you do something -- if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you -- yours. 15 But -- but, oh -- if you do not forgive men their trespasses -- say this out loud with me -- neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Oh! You not only have torture that comes your way, but the Father in Heaven says, "I will not any longer forgive your sins until you forgive. Then I will forgive your sins." So, what's happened to you then over the years, where you stopped back here and you said, "I'm not going to ever forgive them; no more forgiveness of you"? That means all those sins that you committed since the time the sin of unforgiveness has been piling up on your account. And guess what unforgiveness sins permits the enemy to do to you. This is the legal right the torturers have to torture you. Your sins are not forgiven. Does this make sense to you? Do you realize everything about forgiveness we've been teaching you came from the lips of one person? Jesus.

So take a look at the points beneath this:

### **Part 1: Our Unforgiveness Causes God to Stop Forgiving Us.**

Number 1. God forgives our sins only if we forgive others their debts and Sins.

Number 2. Unforgiven sins are the legal basis -- underline those two words -- they're the legal basis for our present life Torment.

How do the tormenters have rights to get to us and make us suffer? Answer: God delivers us to them. On what basis does God the Father deliver a Christian and a non-Christian to receive torture? Answer: God has stopped forgiving sins; and that opens a door to the enemy. That's where this comes from. Now I thought...I thought if I accepted Jesus Christ's death and resurrection as payment of my sins, all my sins are forgiven. Is that true or not? Yeah, that's true. Since that's true, how can Jesus say, "If I don't forgive My Father won't forgive", since Jesus told me, "If you

believe in Me, all your sins will be forgiven”? Whoa, does that ever sound complicated?

We have a session after lunch, we're going to deal with that question: How can all my sins be forgiven, and yet, if I don't forgive, my sins aren't forgiven? Wait until you find out the answer. But this right now is very true that there is unforgiveness that I have, and that God will respond by not forgiving me.

Number 3. Torment may affect you physically, spiritually, mentally, financially and Emotionally -- emotionally.

Last week we were with some new friends who are going to bring TEN to India. They're going to bring 100 to 150 bishops from all across India, out of the country to another country, along with leaders from ten other Asian countries, to meet with us. And one of the key men that flew over, wonderful man, was telling me about his wife, and that his wife got terrible cancer. And they were going to have this massive operation the next day. She kept praying, and she said, God woke her up and said, "You have a person you will not forgive. Forgive them." Woke her right up out of a sleep. So the husband was telling me this at lunch time and he said, "My wife got up in the middle of the night and forgave this person. The next day, when I got up to take her to the hospital, my wife said, 'I don't need to go to the hospital because I forgave someone'". And he said to her, "What are you talking about? You have cancer? And you have serious cancer." She said, "No, I don't. The cancer was because of my unforgiveness. Because God told me that's why I had cancer."

This just happened last week. So the man said to me, "I drove her to the hospital, and they started prepping her for the big operation". She said, "No, I want an x-ray right now before you cut me". They took an x-ray, and the doctors all came in, and they said, "This is impossible. Here's the x-rays. Here's the other x-rays. You have no cancer. Where did it go, and how did it leave you?" And she said to the doctors, "It's because I had unforgiveness". Until you realize how powerful it is to affect every area of your life, you will not be determined to the level you need to be never to permit this one sin in your life ever again -- ever again.

Number 4. Torment increases in intensity due to the increasing number of your unforgiven Sins.

As time goes on, and you sin again, those sins are not forgiven. And the torment increases as you continue to sin throughout your life, and those sins are not forgiven, then torment increases.

Number 5. Star this one. Torment from unforgiveness does not cease by prayer, by good works, by ministry, or by Medicine. Why? Because God delegated you to have torment.

We brought some of our friends down from the United States years ago to Africa for the first time. And my wife, Darlene, and I were sitting around the table with a relative of ours. She has three children, and she was down, and there was fruit on the table, and people were peeling an orange and taking an apple, and she said: "I can't pick up fruit". My wife said: "You can't pick up fruit?" "No, I'm severely allergic to all fruit. If I touch that orange, my hand will break out. I can't even peel an orange for my children. I cannot slice an apple. I am extremely allergic to all fruit."

Well, my wife is a very godly and discerning woman, and she said to her, "That doesn't make sense. That doesn't make sense you as a mother can't peel the fruit for your kids. Does it?" "No." "Do you have unforgiveness in your life?" "What?" This is at breakfast. "Do you have unforgiveness in your life?" "Yes." "Who do you have unforgiveness for?" "My husband's boss. My husband..." And we know this; her husband is a minister of music at a big church. And at the time the boss was the senior pastor, was filled with selfish ambition, and was harsh, and domineering, and abusive. She said, "He has hurt my husband time after time, and I hate him. I have unforgiveness."

Well, Darlene knows all about forgiveness, and she led her through repentance and forgiveness at breakfast time. The next morning they come down for breakfast, and Darlene says to her, "Would you please peel me an orange?" "I can't touch oranges." "Yes, you can. Please peel me an orange." "No, I'll break out." "No you won't." She takes an orange, peels an orange, and says, "I haven't touched a fruit for years, and look at me, I can even eat the fruit with my fingers", and all other allergies were taken away. If you didn't know this truth about unforgiveness, why would you ever think allergies are connected to unforgiveness? It's a form of torture. And no matter how many shots you take, you'll still have allergies. Why? That's the form of torture God gave to you. Does that mean all torture is from unforgiveness? No, but the majority of it is.

## **Part #2: Our Unforgiveness Spreads – it spreads -- Through the Slide of Unforgiveness.**

I have a verse here -- Ephesians 4:29-32. I want you to pay attention to the words that are in this verse.



“Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but -- instead of a corrupt word -- what is good and necessary -- for building people up -- for edification, that it may impart grace to the people who hear you. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, -- look at these words, bitterness, wrath, anger --, clamor, evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind -- the opposite of that is be kind -- to another, tenderhearted, -- here it is -- forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

I have a 7-stage slide. I call this the Slide of Unforgiveness. Because what happens is we don't think unforgiveness does anything to us. Somebody hurts us. We make a split-second choice, 'I don't want to think about it, I'm just going to stuff it and go on', and we don't realize 'I now have an infection starting in my heart'. But unforgiveness is alive, and it grows, and it spreads just like infection in a wound is alive. And it spreads in your arm, and into your system, and into your blood, and into your thinking, and then into your oxygen -- it spreads.

Unforgiveness spreads, and it spreads the same way in everybody. It goes from this stage, to this stage, to a worse stage, to another stage, to another stage, to another stage. So when I'm trying to help a person, or a church, or anything where there is signs that God's judgment is upon them, I will ask them a question in stage 4, 5, or 6 out of the blue. And depending upon how they answer -- if they say, "Well yeah, I have that", then I know they have had unforgiveness for a long time.

Unforgiveness doesn't spread quickly. It spreads over time. And it spreads to the same conclusion for everyone. You cannot stop it. You cannot say, "I'm going to have unforgiveness in stage 1 and 2, but I'm not going to 3". You will go to 3. And you will go to 4, and you will go to 5, and you will go to 6, and you will end up in 7. So, the other way to find this out -- if I was talking to you, I'd say to you, "So, how many years ago did you get this big wound?" "Four years ago." I guarantee you they're in 7. You're going to see yourself in this.

So let's take a look at these as we fill out the 7 Stages, and just kind of see, as we go through it, if this sounds a little bit too much familiar.

### **Stage 1: And the fill-in – the word is Unforgiveness.**

Stage 1, obviously, is unforgiveness. Right down beneath that

sentence I have the words: What is unforgiveness? It's to harbor ill-feelings to the person for their hurtful attitudes and actions to you. That's what unforgiveness is. To the right hand side: What is the result of the life of the person who won't forgive that person? Well, because of the wounds you experience by the other person, you decide that you aren't going to forgive them, or maybe you just decided to forget it and move on with your life; not realizing that that wound will soon become infected. Even if you stuff it, it stays there and it spreads.

### **Point #2. Stage 2 is called Anger.**

To feel displeasure, hostility, antagonism; to harbor strong, negative feelings toward the person. If you don't forgive, that's how you'll start to feel angry about this. As time progresses, your unforgiveness slides into feelings of anger. Sometimes you even lose your temper toward them or someone else who reminds you of them. You have to calm yourself when they are nearby to hide your anger. A lot of 'hmm's going on. How'd you know?

### **Stage #3. Oh, boy, this is a hard one – Bitterness.**

This is not a fun stage. Bitterness: to have sharp, negative emotions; cynicism; to be harsh, callous and untrusting. What happens to you? You close your heart completely toward the other person. You are easily irritated, frustrated, and have lost your peace. You no longer trust the person, and start becoming sullen, withdrawn, and hard. You put an impenetrable wall around your heart. Well, what happens when you have bitterness in your heart toward a person? Your mouth moves into gear. You have to start expressing how you feel inside because it bubbles up, and you want to say something about them that's not particularly very good.

### **Stage 4 is called Slander.**

Slander. Slander. S-L-A-N-D-E-R. What is slander? The definition beneath it: to communicate for the purpose of defaming and damaging another person's reputation. It's when you gossip about a person -- that's because you have unforgiveness. And when you love to hear the rumor about somebody else, it's because they have unforgiveness, and it's spreading over you. How does that feel in your life when you find yourself talking down about the person who wounded you, and are glad when you hear they are suffering? You kind of smile. You misread the other person's



motives all the time, even when their motives probably are okay, because you can't trust them, and you tell others not to trust them either. You gossip about them. Sound familiar? Hum. How much gossip happens? A lot. How much unforgiveness is there? A lot. When a person has been gossiping, what do you know is true about them? They have unforgiveness towards the person they are gossiping about; or why would they speak evil of them?

God help us, and may we help ourselves. And so, the next time you hear somebody gossiping, say, "So, when are you going to forgive them?" And they will choke. "What do you mean forgive them? I don't need to forgive them." "Well then, why are you spreading such negative things about them? Would you like them to do that for you?" And if you hear words coming out of your mouth, stop, and say, "Oh no. Oh no, no, no, no. Oh, no, torture is coming. Oh no! And unforgiveness of my sins is coming. Oh, no. I am going to forgive that person right now."

Stage 5 happens a lot when marriages begin to fall apart right here. They're falling apart but Stage 5 is when they really start to rip. It is the word Resentment: To have deep-seated critical attitude toward a person; to repeatedly rehearse, in your mind, the past offenses that person has done.

### **Stage 5 is called Resentment.**

And this is where a guy comes home late from work, and the wife says to him, "You're always late. Back in 1963 you started coming late. And you told me you never would be late again. And then, you told me you wouldn't. And then you started..." And this whole long list... And the poor man is standing here, "I was only two minutes late". That's resentment. That woman has long years of bitterness, keeping track.

So, how does this look like on the right side? You keep track of all the mistakes, and unkind actions of the other person, building a whole case why they cannot be trusted. You link all previous negatives about the person into a well-worn- list that gets longer and longer. Your bitterness deepens and you can't find anything good about them. How many husbands have heard this from their wives? How many wives have heard this from their husbands? Some wives have volumes about what their husbands have done. If you begin talking to somebody who says, "I'm having trouble in their marriage", you say them, "So, how many times has your husband really hurt you?", and they begin to count the ways, you know how long they've not been forgiving.

Stage #6. We don't like this word, because we never think we ever do this, but we do. Look at what I wrote beneath the fill-in -- to dislike intensity or passionately; to feel extreme hostility toward, to detest, to avoid contact. What is that? Hatred -- hatred. You cannot resent somebody without it growing into hatred. You can't.

So look at what we do. You dread being with the person, even seeing them in a store upsets you. You now have so many reasons to dislike and not trust them, that you don't want anything to do with them. You avoid them. And just the thought of them sets your emotions on end. They are your enemy, and you hate them, and they deserve to be hated. After all, you've got a list of all the resentment reasons.

But look at Stage 7: To desire to get even, to inflict harm, humiliation; to inflict punishment; to require retribution. What is this? Vengeance -- vengeance. So here it is; your inner desire to make them pay for what they've done. This is where wives say to their husbands, when they want to have sex at night, "I have a terrible headache". They didn't have a headache a minute ago, but they have a headache now. Why? Vengeance. I'm very tired. I need to pray. I need to study my notes from the TEN course today. Yeah, but that is vengeance. I don't mean that it's never right for a woman to say, "You know, can we wait a little bit? I'm really tired." No man will find offense from that. But, in time, that is vengeance for many marriages. And it makes a man, then, has vengeance deeper for his wife. And he says, "If you won't have sex with me, I'll find somebody who does". And then that vengeance cycle. And then another wound, and the more...

[Question from audience member] "On the corporate side?"

On the corporate side, do you mean in business? Oh, man, when your boss takes credit for what you do, and he gets the raise, and he gets the bonus, what do you find yourself talking about in the coffee break? What your boss did. And you begin to steal from the office to make that company pay for not treating you well. And when you're selling a big account, and the guy offers you a pay off, "This company will never know, and I deserve it, and they don't deserve it. And I hope that boss gets fired." That's vengeance.

Your inner desire to make them pay for what they've done builds to the point that you take action. You wish them evil. That's a curse. You don't want anything good to happen to them. You're not going to bless them. You may even try to hurt them in various ways. You may even wish that they were dead, or want to kill them

yourself. What does this say? That unforgiveness has so many negative consequences in our lives, it's something we should hate not to forgive. One reason is because God will deliver us to the torturers, and that will stay that way and get worse the more people we don't forgive. The second thing is, when God sees me not forgiving, He says, "I'm not forgiving you". And, therefore, the sins of unforgiveness, and the discipline, and the judgment that results from these sins can be more than the torture that happens. And then, my heart becomes more and more infected from unforgiveness to anger to bitterness to slander to resentment to hatred to vengeance. No wonder God hates this.

Well, my wife and I have lived a long life together. And she's had to forgive me many times. And I've needed to forgive her a couple of times. But I am so much in love with my wife. And she's forgiven me so many times from coming late. But, you know, you can't live together happily unless you have a forgiving heart. Because the other person that you're married to just isn't as perfect as you are. He liked that one. And, when you're in ministry, like we are, you get more than your share of wounds. If you're a pastor or a dean, you know that. It's what comes with the territory of serving. And my wife has written a number of best-selling books, and done a number of courses that are used around the world, and she loves to write poetry. One day she said, "I wrote a poem about forgiveness". And it was so good, I said, "All the world needs to hear this".

So this is my wife, Darlene Marie Wilkinson. Would you please welcome her? Do you want to come on up here?

DMW: I can stand here. Will you stay with me?

BW: Why don't you read this? I will stay with you. Did you forgive me this morning?

DMW: Yes. I made sure.

BW: So, this is a poem.

DMW:

The king forgave his servant. The debt was very great.  
The servant left forgiven. But going out the gate,  
He met a fellow servant who owed him money too  
And threw him into prison until he got what was due.  
Perhaps he thought his being spared was something he  
deserved.  
But mercy and compassion left his heart and soul unstirred.

Where was the grateful spirit that the servant could have shown  
by being spared so great a sum, and pardoned to go home?  
Forgiveness is a precious gift that's given by God's grace.  
But, if we take it lightly, something else will take its place.  
Offenses will be counted, and we'll soon forget the joy  
that being so forgiven brings that nothing can destroy.  
So take a breath, and ask the Lord to take you to that day,  
when He, in such compassion, washed all your sin away.  
Then go to one another with a humble, tender heart,  
and give what you've been given; a fresh and second start.

### **[Become A Transformed Woman, Darlene Wilkinson]**

Bring transformed is what all of us want; because God's desire for us is to conform us more and more into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ.

What are the secrets to being set free?

Number 1. Prepare your heart to genuinely Agree with God's Word.

We're commanded to be transformed, but we are not able to transform ourselves. You are an original masterpiece. You are special and dearly loved.

Let's define the word "weight" first. I want you to take your weight and hand it to her, and say, "I'm giving this. This was the weight that I gave to Jesus."