

The Dangers of Unforgiveness

*25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. **Mark 11:25 NIV***

Illustration: *There was an elderly woman who was conversing with a friend about her sister, whom she hasn't spoken to in more than 40 years. Her friend asks why and she replies, "Because we had a problem, she hurt and offended me." Her friend states, "I imagine it was a big problem, tell me what happened." The elderly lady replies, "I do not remember why all I know is that it hurt me very much." This is a true story that teaches the impact of an offense, how it destroys relationships and binds the heart of a person. Is it worth risking life's happiness for an offense? The offended person loses more than the offender. Unforgiveness is the guillotine that decapitates our prayers and this is why we do not receive answers from God. Forgiveness is not a feeling, but instead a decision that frees the offender and offended. We must not allow our years of life to be wasted due to an offense, instead we must forgive, let go and bless our offenders.*

Introduction: Offenses are inevitable and it is our responsibility to forgive and let go so we may live a life united to God's will. Today we will learn about some dangers of unforgiveness and advice on how to forgive.

1. Unforgiveness, Offense and Resentment are the Guillotine of our Prayers.

Mark 11:25

- a. Unforgiveness is one of the greatest obstacles in prayer. It is like a great boulder on your path; while you desire to advance and achieve your dreams, the boulder which symbolizes unforgiveness, impedes you from advancing.
- b. Imagine you are running a marathon with many obstacles you have to remove during the race, and this delays the fulfillment of your purpose. There are others who see so many obstacles that they become paralyzed and do not advance in the marathon of their life. Have you felt paralyzed in an area of your life? This can be because of unforgiveness in your heart.
- c. Unforgiveness is a guillotine that cuts the source of intimacy with God. Unforgiveness cuts and decapitates our prayer's fluidity and God cannot receive them. Offense is like a barrier that separates us from God.

2. God Does Not Receive our Prayers. *Matthew 5:23-24 NIV*

- a. The Word teaches us, *if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, then go and reconcile...*
- b. Read this passage well, it doesn't state, *IF we have something against our brother, but instead, IF our brother has something against us then reconcile. Even when we know someone has something against us we must approach, solve and reconcile.*
- c. Unforgiveness, offense and resentment decapitate the fluidity of our prayers and God the Father's answers to our prayers.

- d. Matthew 18:26-30, in this parable a servant is forgiven a debt of ten thousand bags of gold by the king, but this servant wasn't able to forgive his servant when he owed him a hundred silver coins, instead he threw him in prison until he paid the debt. We cannot be ungrateful with the forgiveness God has granted us. We must cancel all of our offenders' debts just as God did for us.

3. Love is Cancelled. Romans 5:28 NIV

- a. If we do not forgive then love is cancelled, because love is to forgive regardless of what we feel. Forgiveness is the revelation of true love.
- b. God demonstrates His unlimited and unconditional love by forgiving our sin, or better said our offenses.
- c. When Jesus Christ was crucified he took all curse and sin, of the world, to death; when He resurrected in victory all sin had died but His unfailing love remained and we were saved by grace.
- d. If it wasn't for this act of love, we would have never been forgiven! When we forgive, let go and bless our offenders then we empower the true love of God.

4. What is Not Forgiveness? And What is Forgiveness? Matthew 18:21-35 NIV

What is NOT Forgiveness?	What is Forgiveness?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To try to forget 2. Deny what happened 3. Let time erase the offense 4. Ignore what happened 5. Feeling (s) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To let go of someone who offended you 2. To let go 3. To free someone who has hurt you 4. To cancel a pending debt

Conclusion: *It is impossible to forgive due to an emotional feeling; forgiveness starts with a decision. Unforgiveness, offense and resentment are a guillotine to our prayers. Remember that offenses are inevitable and they will happen in our lives, this is why it is crucial to make forgiveness a lifestyle. Stop losing your blessing, important relationships, years of life, joy, peace, prosperity etc. and make the decision to forgive, let go and bless your offenders through Jesus Christ. If Jesus who was a man and God was able to forgive, then we must also forgive. Let's say the following prayer:*

Sinner's Prayer

Lord Jesus I recognize I have sinned and that you died for me. Today I repent and ask for forgiveness. I give you my life and heart so you can be my Lord and personal Savior, amen.