

## Understand your Enemy: Hurts & Offense pt 3 Oct 16

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### Church-wide Requests: **PRAY TOGETHER. Life on Mission: Tupendane**

1. Pray for the container weight... “we don’t ship air” was the motto. So it’s right on the edge. Pray that it passes scales and inspections.
2. The insurance we could buy is only from Canada to United Arab Emirates – so there is a significant portion of the journey we are uninsured for. Pray for angles to guard and guide!
3. Pray for it to arrive quickly and for everything to go to good use in helping those in need!
4. - the Sudan Ebola - that has begun in Uganda, and the first death occurred in Kampala earlier this week.
5. Please pray for our friends, the children, and wisdom for our team that will need to go to unload and process the contents of the container.

### **RECAP: In part 1** – we looked at WHO OUR ENEMY IS and IS NOT!

1. Our enemy is NOT other people – even if they hurt us – We fight FOR people not AGAINST people.
2. Our enemy is the Devil! And his demons. OUTSIDE
3. Our enemy is our flesh!! Our own sinful desires. INSIDE

**Picture:** fly in the house... foothold in the door, to stronghold (bondage)

**Soil:** hurts & wounds → **seed:** lies → **fruit:** Offense, bitterness & resentment = **STRONGHOLD**

**Jesus was clear in his commands for us to forgive.** He expected forgiveness to flow from his disciples, regardless of the hurt or wound they experienced!

- a. Overlooked... missed in a group message where people were celebrated... offered to help and were declined rudely....
- b. The SAME person treats you badly.... They glare at you... lie about you... talk behind your back...
- c. Mocked? Ridiculed? Falsely accused?
- d. TRAPPED in sin or struggle and can’t break FREE – hate yourself? God?
- e. Have you been ignored? Treated unfairly?
- f. Parents won’t listen to YOUR SIDE? Kids won’t see all the work you do?
- g. God didn’t answer an IMPORTANT PRAYER?
- h. Rejection... abandonment... dumped by a friend... passed on a job... ditched for someone else...
- i. Abused... broken... persecuted for your faith...

**You may be tempted to think that’s not fair! Forgiveness – ALWAYS – is IMPOSSIBLE! The disciples thought the same thing! They thought his call to forgive was TOO MUCH FOR ANYONE TO FOLLOW!**

### **A. Forgiveness is a Compassionate Command**

1. **Luke 17:3-10** Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him."
  - a. **CLEAR COMMAND FROM JESUS**
2. The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" And the Lord said, "If you had faith like a grain of mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.
  - a. **He was telling them they didn't need more FAITH**
3. "Will any one of you who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and recline at table'? Will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink'? Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'"
  - a. **They needed more OBEDIENCE – Jesus was saying, "JUST DO IT"**

But wait! I said it was a **COMPASSIONATE COMMAND!!** It doesn't seem like the disciples saw it that way!! **And if we are honest, we don't think of it that way either!**

**Don't we deserve COMPASSION from Jesus and restitution from those who have WRONGED US????**

**B. The devastating effects of offense, bitterness & resentment:**

1. **When we hold onto offense, the Lord does not forgive our offenses**
  - a. **Matthew 6:12-15** and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
  - b. **Matthew 18:21-35; Matthew 24:10-14**
  - c. **The Lord takes his command to forgive seriously!**
2. **It imprisons us in the pain from whatever happened and prevents us from healing**
  - a. **There is a quote that has been attributed to many, many wise people that says** "resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die." This speaks to the toxic effect that stress, anger, and anxiety has on us when we refuse to forgive.
  - b. **Unprocessed PAIN acts like TRAUMA on the brain... it GROWS – making the original problem WORSE than the actual event!**
3. **It can effect our physical health as well as our mental health**
  - a. "There is an enormous physical burden to being hurt and disappointed," says Karen Swartz, M.D., director of the Mood Disorders Adult Consultation Clinic at The Johns Hopkins Hospital. Chronic anger puts you into a fight-or-flight mode, which results in numerous changes in heart rate, blood pressure and immune response. Those changes, then, increase the risk of depression, heart disease and diabetes, among other conditions. Forgiveness, however, calms stress levels, leading to improved health.

- b. **People who hang on to grudges, however, are more likely to experience severe depression and post-traumatic stress disorder**, as well as other health conditions.
- c. Here is a list of physical and mental conditions they have linked to holding onto anger, grudges, resentment... to offence. <https://www.verywellmind.com/how-anger-problems-can-affect-your-health-3145075> ; <https://www.verywellmind.com/the-mental-health-effects-of-holding-a-grudge-5176186> ; <https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/signs-resentment> ; <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.4103/0253-7176.127259> ; <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/forgiveness/art-20047692> ; <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/forgiveness-your-health-depends-on-it#:~:text=Chronic%20anger%20puts%20you%20into,and%20diabetes%2C%20among%20other%20conditions.>

- i. Heart disease
- ii. Poorer pulmonary function
- iii. diabetes
- iv. Increased levels of decline as you age
- v. Digestion
- vi. Reproduction
- vii. Immune system
- viii. Longer time to heal wounds
- ix. Increased risk of PTSD
- x. Attachment disorders!
  1. Dr. Terry Levy writes that FORGIVENESS is one of seven KEY attributes for having SECURE ATTACHMENT – which effects the way you see God, yourself and the world around – as well as improving overall mental and physical health!
- xi. Increased levels of cortisol (stress hormone)
- xii. Headaches
- xiii. Upset stomachs
- xiv. Increases asthma symptoms
- xv. Increased risk of suicide and suicidal thoughts
- xvi. Depression & anxiety
- xvii. Sleep & insomnia
- xviii. It's not an official diagnosis yet, but health care professionals have a term for it: post-traumatic embitterment disorder or PTED

#### **4. It is at the root of addiction and other harmful behaviours**

- a. The GREATEST HURTS we can experience are relational in nature! When we don't deal with those hurts, we look for an outlet to DEAL WITH OUR PAIN!
  - i. Cutting and self harm
  - ii. Suicide
  - iii. Addictions

#### **5. It causes our LOVE to grow cold**

- a. “Persistent bitterness may result in global feelings of anger and hostility that, when strong enough, could affect a person’s physical health,” says psychologist Dr. Carsten Wrosch from Concordia University in Montreal, Canada.  
This means that even though you started out angry at one person or event, the anger and resentment will grow strong enough through the years to be directed not only at an individual or event, but at any other people around you.  
It doesn’t even matter if they have done you wrong; **holding on to that anger for a long time has, in essence, changed how you see others**, and even a slight mishap can produce strong feelings of anger in you that are not warranted by the event that set it off.
  - b. **Matthew 24:9-13** Offenses will come, which leads to deception and lawlessness and the hearts of BELIEVERS GROWING COLD.
    - i. **Written to the disciples about the End of the Age... Jesus was talking about BELIEVERS. What would happen to many in the End.**
  - c. **NOTHING cools our love FASTER than OFFENSE.**
  - d. **John 13:35** By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
  - e. **We THINK we are PROTECTING ourselves from getting hurt by holding onto the offense...**
  - f. But in reality, WE ARE HURTING OURSELVES FURTHER AND KILLING OUR TESTIMONY.
  - g. **Hebrews 12:14-15** Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;
- 6. It sets us up for further deception – MORE PAIN**
- a. In the above list... you can see... so many things that result from holding onto the injustices we experience!
  - b. **Revelation 16** describes God’s Righteous Judgement that is coming for all the SIN IN THE WORLD – the PAIN, murder, stealing, sexual immorality, fighting, slander, gossip, abuse, etc.
    - i. **KEY TRAIT of those being judged:** they are MAD at God they CURSE him – it’s NOT UNBELIEF – ITS OFFENSE!
    - ii. **We will talk MORE about the LIES OF THE ENEMY in pt 4**

### C. Benefits of Forgiveness

- a. When we forgive, we are PROMISED forgiveness
- b. We can HEAL from past hurts
- c. Begin finding freedom from addiction
- d. Healthier relationships
- e. Less anxiety & depression
- f. A stronger immune system
- g. Improved heart health
- h. Improved self-esteem

#### The best two benefits:

- a. **When you forgive, you free the one who’s been in jail – YOURSELF!** And you follow the example of JESUS

b. We model the LOVE OF CHRIST to those around us! Salvation is built on FORGIVENESS

**D. Walk in Radical Love & Forgiveness – BE UNOFFENDABLE**

**Our LOVE is a KEY piece to fulfilling BOTH the Great Commission and the Great Command** – this is how we demonstrate who JESUS IS and is the basis by which we SHARE THE GOSPEL – in hearts that overflow with compassion for others!

**a. Recognize a tree by its Fruit – identifying offense in our lives**

- i. Defensiveness
- ii. Avoidant behaviors
- iii. Angry outburst
- iv. Addictive behaviors
- v. Wishing harm on yourself and/or others
- vi. People avoiding you/ avoiding others
- vii. telling everyone what happened...
- viii. Replaying the event regularly
- ix. Irritability
- x. Mind reading – judging others motives – how do you know how they feel? Or what they were thinking?
- xi. You know you were hurt – abused – treated shamefully – you recognize the hurt and pain and anger towards the offended.

**REMEMBER:** these are all opposite of the FRUIT OF LOVE... and LOVE is the greatest indicator of SPIRITUAL MATURITY AND HEALTH.

- i. Ask a friend. Or better yet, ask someone you can trust that will TELL YOU THE TRUTH. Often our spouse, or closest friends are unwilling to share their concerns with us.
- ii. Seek perspective from JESUS – allow him to examine your heart
- iii. Seek perspective from others – pastor, councillor, mentor, someone who can speak into your life.

**b. Confront the LIES:**

- i. Forgiving means we are saying what happened is “ok” FALSE
- ii. Forgiving and trusting are the same thing. FALSE
- iii. Forgiving means opening yourself up to more hurt! FALSE
- iv. Forgiving means I must face the pain inside... TRUE

**We get to CHOOSE. You may feel like a prisoner to the pain inside...** I get that! Depending on how long you have been there, this might be a journey!

- E.g. I told one woman who had suffered MUCH abuse... that working through forgiveness and healing could take many years... but they were years well spent...

Feelings and hurts may come back! Then we CHOOSE AGAIN. And PRAY AND SEEK THE LORD and get into COMMUNITY with people that will HELP US HEAL.

**c. Steps to Forgiveness:**

- i. **ACCEPT what happened to you.** Who hurt you? What happened? How did you feel? How do you feel about yourself? ACCEPT IT.
- ii. **CHOOSE to forgive & confess offense**
  1. The choice is the START – processing the pain can take much longer... especially if it is rooted deeply in your past...
  2. Every time the pain surfaces... we go through the steps.
- iii. **PRAY for the one who hurt you.** PRAY for yourself. PRAY and tell God exactly how you feel – BE HONEST
- iv. **PERSPECTIVE: Ask Jesus to speak truth into what happened.**
  - a. What does he want you to know?
  - b. How does he see you?
  - c. How does he see the other person?

**2. Seek to empathize with the person who hurt you – perspective shift**

  - a. Prayerfully seek the Lords heart as to how he sees the person who hurt you
  - b. What does HE desire for them? How does HE feel towards them?
  - c. Try and practice 1 Cor 13 – see the best – what kind of hurts must they have experienced to do what they did to you?
  - d. E.g. hurt people, hurt people
- v. **LOVE IS ACTION: do good to those who hurt you.** NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE OR APPROPRIATE.
  1. If possible, DO GOOD TO THE ONES WHO HURT YOU.
  2. They don't have to know it's YOU doing it either! This is about YOU primarily and your HEART.
  3. Praying for and doing good to those who hurt you can be VERY effective in helping you truly cancel the DEBT created by their actions against you.

**MARANATHA!! Come soon Lord!**

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**SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2022**

**Cruise Ship → → → → → Battleship**

1. **Great Command** (Mt 22:37-40): Love God – Love people: hospitality, generosity, serving & empathy
2. **Great Commission** (Mt 28:18-20): Disciple family, friends, neighbors & beyond
3. **Word & Truth** (1Pet 3:15): Know the Gospel, grow in discernment, speak the truth in love
4. **Persecuted Church** (2 Cor 4:7-10): Religious freedom, freedom of speech, spiritual fortitude, wisdom
5. **Church Renewal:** Directors for India & the Chinese worldwide, make many global disciple makers (The Way)
6. **DONE - Leadership:** Wisdom and direction in the search for Lead Pastor and Executive Pastor