

## Unforgiveness: The Road To Defeat

One of the greatest stumbling blocks to mankind is in the area of unforgiveness. In counseling hundreds of individuals and married couples having conflicts both personal and interpersonal, we find that unforgiveness is one of the major problems. Unforgiveness towards God, self and others related to the past or present is a cancer that eats away at relationships and erodes our walk with the Lord.

Jesus' teaching about continual forgiveness is often overlooked, yet it is the key to solving many personal difficulties.

Matthew 18:21,22 "Then Peter came and said to Him, 'Lord how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.'"

Unforgiveness is sin against God. It is in obedience to His command that we are to forgive others even as God has forgiven us. Mark 11:25,26 "And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions."

The following guidelines will be helpful in dealing with areas of unforgiveness.

1. CHOOSE to forgive those who have hurt you. Ephesians 4:32 — "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." Satan will use unforgiveness to defeat us and others. 2 Corinthians 2:10,11 "But whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes."

2. CONFESS and REPENT of your sin to God (unforgiveness IS sin). 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Psalm 32:5 "I acknowledged my sin to Thee, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord'; And Thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin."

3. ASK forgiveness of those you have wronged (including an ungodly heart attitude). Matthew 5:23,24 "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering."

4. ASK God to bless them. Luke 6:28 "Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."

5. You BLESS them (do something nice for them). Luke 6:27 "But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you."

6. ACCEPT them (treat them the way God treats us even if they are wrong). Romans 15:7 "Wherefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God."

7. Look through the eyes of FAITH, and believe God to make the necessary changes in them. Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

By making a DECISION to forgive and by following through on these guidelines, you will be led from defeat to victory. It will set you free and others that were bound up by your unforgiveness.