



CREATING A CARING CONGREGATION

(Practicing the "One Anothers" of the Bible)

"Forgiving One Another"

Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13

Wednesday, February 15, 2023

Why is it beneficial for Christians to study the one anothers of the bible? How would your relationships change if you committed to being a doer of the word of God as it relates to the one anothers of the bible? (Read James 1:22-25) Imagine practicing the one anothers in your home and local church congregation. Will you commit to do your part of one another relationships?

1. This study is not intended that discipline and punishment are not warranted or that abusive behavior and people should not be stopped. Time will not allow us to cover that subject in this lesson. This study begins by examining the immediate context or surrounding verses of Ephesians 4:32 which is Ephesians 4:17-32. The emphasis is upon the difference in behavior and attitude between the Christian and non-Christian. We are instructed to put off the old man and put on the new man. The new man is the one that forgives. What does the old man do? Compare malice and forgiveness.
2. Notice the context of Colossians 3:13 which is Colossians 3:1-17. The emphasis is on life in Christ as opposed to life outside of Christ. Christians are told to put off the old and put on the new. Notice that Christians are to replace the negative with the positive.
3. Christians who have a complaint against each other must forgive each other to obey this scripture. Christians who interact with other Christians will need to forgive and be forgiven. Christians should not be shocked that Christians sometimes offend each other. Carrying a grudge is like walking everywhere you go with a backpack filled with bricks. At some point you must decide to let it go and lighten your load.

4. When you find yourself needing to forgive someone do you ever marvel at how God in Christ has forgiven you? Read St Matthew 18:21-35 and notice what Jesus teaches about forgiveness. Christians must remember that we have been offended but we have also offended.
5. If you are an adult, you have discovered that relationships can be difficult. It is challenging to relate to people without occasionally and unintentionally offending people in some manner. Read James 3:1-12 and note how difficult it is to not offend others with your words. If it is so difficult to not offend others by what you say, then there will be a great need for forgiveness. Have you considered the damage you can do to relationships with your tongue? Do you usually apologize when you offend people with your words? Watch your mouth because it can cause some trouble in the church.
6. The Open Bible Lexicon defines forgiveness as to stop blaming or taking an offense into account. To forgive is a choice one makes. Forgiveness does not always include forgetting but it does include not continuing to bring it up and blaming the person again for past offenses.
7. The following bullet points are suggestions as to how you might become more effective at forgiving people in the congregation who might also be family and friends. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will give you more.
 - Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your remembrance anyone you have not forgiven. Analyze your heart to see what you feel concerning that question. Anticipate that you will need to forgive others and be spiritually prepared to do so.
 - Prayerfully think of some things God has forgiven you of that you felt were unforgivable by the Holy God. Ask God to help you see others like he saw you so that you can forgive them like he forgave you.

- Focus more on your choice to forgive than your ability to forget.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit brings to your remembrance anyone you have offended. Ask God to give you the humility and strength to ask them for forgiveness.
- Reflect upon times when you unintentionally hurt someone you loved. How did you feel when they forgave you? When God provides the opportunity make someone else feel that way too.
- Ask yourself, how tame is my tongue? Seek to improve how you control what you say and how you say it.
- Allow someone close to you to give their impression of how you are maturing in the area of forgiveness. Forgive them if they offend you with an honest answer.
- Spend some time alone thinking about his forgiveness. Spend time thanking him for forgiving you and helping you forgive others.