

## SETTING YOUR SELF FREE IN THE NEW YEAR!

### Ephesians 4:17-32

INTRODUCTION: Before we can begin a New Year we need to put the old year behind us. We must forgive all others and forgive ourselves before we are truly free to serve our Lord with a full heart. We must make peace with our past before we can walk in peace in this next New Year. Thanks to Jesus Christ's work in our hearts we can be set totally free. If you are still angry, bitter, or hurt in your heart over something that happened in your past you are allowing that pain to control your life. Ephesians 4:31-32. If we desire God's forgiveness, freedom, and peace in our hearts we must extend those same things to others.

#### I. THE PURPOSE OF FORGIVENESS!

The primary purpose of forgiveness is getting yesterday's guilt, anger, and bitterness off our backs. Romans 12:18-21. Our lives are not to be filled with turmoil and resentment over the past or those things will continue to control our lives. We must forgive others because our heavenly Father has forgiven us: Colossians 3:12-14. No matter what someone else has done to you, it is nothing compared to what our sins brought on our Lord Jesus Christ: Yet even as others put Him to death He prayed for the Father to forgive them: Luke 23:34; Romans 5:8. Once we truly experience the forgiveness of our heavenly Father it becomes easier for us to forgive others. Resentment doesn't work: it is unreasonable and unhelpful for us. When we carry resentment over what others have done to us they continue to have control over our emotions and life. Also because we have a continuing need for our heavenly Father to forgive us we dare not burn our bridge by being unforgiving of others: Mark 11:25; Matthew 6:12.

#### II. THE POWER FOR FORGIVENESS!

Before you can find the strength to forgive others you must reveal that you were hurt. Don't try to repress your hurt and say it doesn't matter. So many try to ignore what God says must be dealt with. You must release your offender because by releasing them you actually release yourself. Matthew 18:21-22. Remember, forgiveness is an ongoing continual process. In time God will replace your hurt with His peace: Colossians 3:15.

#### III. THE PEACE OF FORGIVENESS!

Hebrews 12:15: Biblical forgiveness is the only way to have the peace of Christ in our hearts. If you do not learn to forgive others you will have a bitter root in your heart that will begin to defile you and you will give the Devil a foothold in your life. Ephesians 4:26-27. Today, through honest forgiveness you can start anew with the Lord. You can move into next year with the grace and peace of Christ in your heart. Will you chose to move forward in forgiveness?

