

A NEW START FOR A NEW YEAR!

Ephesians 4:29-32

INTRODUCTION: Before we can start successfully the New Year we need to put the old year behind us. It is only as we forgive others and ourselves that we can truly have a Happy New Year! The Word of God tells us how to get yesterday off our back: Ephesians 4:31-32. What our Lord is telling us is that if we want to make things right that were wrong in our past we must put off our rage, bitterness, and anger and be kind and forgive one another.

I. THE PURPOSE OF FORGIVENESS!

The purpose of our getting rid of our wrath and bitterness and replacing it with forgiveness and kindness is to get yesterday off our back. Romans 12:18. Why must we choose to forgive others who have hurt us? First, to get yesterday off your back. Colossians 3:13. No matter how wrongly people have treated us it still cannot compare with how wrongly people mistreated our Lord. 1 John 1:9; Luke 23:34. Second, because resentment does not work for us: Job 5:2. When we do not forgive others we are only hurting ourselves: Job 18:4. Third: our resentment affects our health negatively: Job 21:23-26. One day you and I will need God's forgiveness and if we have not forgiven others who hurt us God says He will not forgive us: Mark 11:25.

II. THE POWER TO FORGIVE!

In order to gain the power to forgive we must first admit to ourselves and our God that someone has hurt us deeply. Remember, there is no closure without disclosure! We must come to the point of choosing to release our offender. Your offender is still controlling you until you release them. You might ask "How many times do I have to forgive others, Peter did: Matthew 18:21-22. When those old feelings of resentment and rage return you must choose to forgive all over again. We may never be able to forget what someone has done to us or someone we love, but we can get rid of the pain that memory brings to us by choosing to forgive that person from our heart.

Our God can and will replace the bitterness and anger in your heart with His peace if you choose to from your heart forgive those who have injured you: Colossians 3:15. When we choose through the power of Christ blood to forgive others from our heart and let our Lord Jesus take His proper place in our hearts He will replace our anger and resentment with His peace and love: Remember, your forgiveness of others does not mean they get away free:. We can trust our Lord to handle those that hurt others. He will decide if they pay for their sins now or later, but He can do a far better job of getting even that we can. Romans 12:17-21.

III. THE PEACE FORGIVENESS BRINGS!

When we choose to forgive others from our heart it bring God's peace into our lives: Hebrews 12:14-15. That is why our forgiveness of those that hurt us is so important: it is the only way to have the peace of God in our hearts. When we have that bitter root in our hearts it does not just defile us but all those around us. As we hold bitterness in our hearts toward those who have hurt us we are giving the Devil a foothold in our lives: Ephesians 4:26-27.

We need not only to forgive those who have harmed us but we need to realize we also have hurt others. You may think you have never hurt anyone in your life. But think about this: are there others you have made promises to that you did not keep? Do you owe others money you have not repaid? How would you like someone else who has harmed you try to make amends for their wrong: Do the same to those you have hurt: Matthew 7:12. We must be very careful

of the words we use when trying to make things right with those we have hurt: Proverbs 12:18. We need to refocus our lives on our relationship with our Lord: Job 11:13-18.

We must put our heart right with our God and with others. We must reach out to God because our God is reaching out to us. We need to accept a brand-new life from our Lord. We must face our world with the peace and hope our Lord can and will give to all those whose hearts are right toward Him: Isaiah 26:3-4.

When is the best time to forgive others who have harmed us to make things right we have hurt? Today, right now reach out to Jesus because He is reaching out to you in order to replace your bitterness and anger with His love and forgiveness.