

- ✎ The New Year and the New You have one additional resolution that comes down to from our Lord, Forgive others their sins against you.

1. Forgiveness is only the request in the Lord's prayer with a caveat.

- ✓ Matthew 6:12; 14-15, He emphasizes this point constantly throughout His ministry Mark 11:25. We saw last time, "Who do we forgive?, Everyone!", Luke 11:4. Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you, Colossians 3:13. Forgiving the unforgivable is hard, nobody knows that better than the One who is commanding us to forgive.

2. Jesus knows how difficult forgiveness can be. He also knows how hard it is if we don't forgive.

- ✓ Experience has shown me that this is one of the leading causes of personal problems and most widespread stronghold that Satan has among Christians. We reap dire consequences for sin that is not dealt with or is tolerated. Anger and bitterness get a grip on us before we get a grip on them. How serious is God about forgiveness and us resolving our anger? Here's another example of what He says about it, see Matthew 18:21-35. The new you in the "New Year" doesn't need any of that!

3. Let's start chipping away at a solution to getting to where God wants us to be.

- ✓ Definition of Forgiveness. What is forgiveness? What does it look like? One, forgiveness is agreeing to live with the consequences of another person's sin. Two, forgiveness is the cessation of anger; you are not angry at them anymore. Three, forgiveness is no longer requiring a person to pay for what they did. As you think about setting your debtors free, ask yourself "Who's the prisoner if I don't forgive?" Unforgiveness destroys us and unforgiveness can destroy others. Stored up anger and resentment is liked stored explosives waiting for something or someone to touch it off causing disaster for anyone nearby.

4. Do you have unresolved anger in your life? Let's take a test to see if you do. This test is from Gary Smalley's book "Making Love Last Forever"

- 1) Resentment test: Is there someone you resent and never let off the hook?
- 2) Responsibility test: "if only they had done this or that, I wouldn't be like I am, ergo in this mess." Are you taking responsibility for your situation? Or are blaming someone else for it?
- 3) Reminder or Reaction test, do you react against some people not because they, necessarily have done anything to you, but they remind you of someone who did? They look, talk, or behave like a person who, apparently, you may not have fully forgiven and that's why you react the way you do. We have to deal decisively with our anger, or it will deal decisively with us.

Would you begin to ask God to reveal to you hidden anger and unforgiveness in your life right now and ask Him to help you to deal with it? Unforgiveness isn't so much an issue between you and your offender as much as it is an issue between you and your God!
