

Unforgiveness: A Barrier to Advancing

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NKJV)

*But know this, that in the last days ^[a]**perilous times** will come: ² For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ unloving, ^[b]**unforgiving**, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴ traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!*

The word unforgiving speaks of being **unwilling** to forgive.

The word unforgiving also means having or making no allowance for error, weakness, or mistakes.

I. Where does unforgiveness come from?

One place that unforgiveness comes from is **offenses**.

Luke 17:1 (NKJV) says, *Then He said to the disciples, “It is impossible that no ^[a]offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come!*

The English word offense is described as an “annoyance or resentment brought about by a perceived **insult** to or **disregard** for oneself or one's standards or principles.”

However, the Greek word for offend in Luke 17:1 describes the part of a **trap** where **bait** was attached.

John Bevere, in his book, “The Bait of Satan,” says that offenses are the bait that satan desires to feed Christians over and over until it **poisons** us.

A second place that unforgiveness comes from is called **betrayal**.

Betrayal is described as a violation of a person's trust or confidence.

Betrayal often comes from people **closest** to us.

Consider the story of Joseph (Genesis 37:50)

II. What is the impact of unforgiveness?

An offense that leads to unforgiveness can turn into **self-imprisonment**.

Proverbs 18:19 (TLB) says, *“It is harder to win back the friendship of an offended brother than to capture a fortified city. His anger shuts you out like iron bars.”*

Unforgiveness can lead to **bitterness**.

Hebrews 12:15 (NLT) says, *“Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.”*

When we do not forgive, we will not receive forgiveness.
Consider Matthew 18:21-35

Matthew 6:14-15 says, *“If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”*

III. How can we forgive?

Recognize that we are imperfect and capable of doing something offensive...even our closest family and friends.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 (NLT) says, *“Not a single person on earth is always good and never sins.”*

Relinquish our right to get revenge.

Romans 12:19 (TLB) says, *“Never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God, for He has said the He will repay those who deserve it.”*

Release the person by faith.

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) says, *“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”*

Use Matthew 5:43-45 as a prayer guide.

*Rhema Christian Center
Minister Tony Ransom
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9:30 a.m.*