

The Power of Forgiveness

2 Cor. 2:1-11

"A person is never more noble and never more like God than when he forgives someone. That is the most godlike thing we can do. There is nothing more glorious that a person can do for another person than to forgive. A truly godly person will be known because he or she has a forgiving heart. God is a forgiving God, Christ is a forgiving Lord, and one who is like God and like Christ will be a forgiving person. Jesus certainly gave us the perfect example when hanging on the cross, hated, mocked and unjustly being tormented to death He asked God to forgive His tormentors...This is spiritual virtue at its highest, noblest. It is the glory of a man to overlook a transgression."
MacArthur

Proverbs 19:11 *Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.*

- I. Paul provides an excellent example of what it means to put into practice the words he wrote in **1 Cor. 16:13-14** concerning the problems he faced in the church. **He kept guard** against those who were hurting the church, **he stood firm** in the faith by the strength of his amen in Christ, **he stayed courageous and strong** toward those who were sinning against him and the church, and he **did everything out of love**, because love covers over a multitude of sins (**1 Peter 4:8**).

2 Cor. 1:23-2:4
Joshua 1:9

Gal. 5:1 *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. **Stand firm**, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.*

Philippians 1:27 *27Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you **stand firm in the one Spirit**, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel*

- II. Christ takes the spiritual health of his body very seriously, and he will do what is necessary to keep it spiritually healthy. He expects those who stand firm in the faith to deal with the wounds inflicted upon the body by sin so that it remains a safe, healthy and Christ-centered church for the sake of the gospel.

2 Cor. 2:5-6

Matt. 18:15-18

Titus 3:10 *"Warn a divisive person once, and then warn them a second time. After that, have nothing to do with them."*

- III. Christ wants his church to be a forgiving church toward those who have sinned against it. He offers grace and mercy toward repentant sinners; therefore, we must offer grace and mercy too. He comes along side to forgive and comfort repentant sinners; therefore, we must forgive and comfort those who have sinned against us. He loves us with an unfailing love; therefore, we must express his love to the unlovely sinner. He protects us from the evil one; therefore, we too must protect the church from Satan's desire to render us ineffective and unproductive in our knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ (**2 Pe. 1:5-9**).

2 Cor. 2:5-11

Matt. 6:15

Hebrews 13:9

Gal. 6:1

Matt. 18:21

Eph. 4:32-52

Ephesians 4:32 *Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

Ephesians 4:26-27 *Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.*