

January 29, 2023
Kryptonite: Week 4

Our series is based around the fictional character of Superman.

There was one thing that could stop him... Kryptonite.

The longer he was exposed to it, the weaker he became, even to the point of death.

The QUESTION we're answering in this series is: What's your Kryptonite?

Maybe the MOST powerful form of Kryptonite that cripples a lot of people, and believers as well, is UNFORGIVENESS!

The deadliness of Unforgiveness is its ability to GROW!

- Unforgiveness
- Hurt
- Anger
- Bitterness... is the fruit; Revenge is the nectar, and Unforgiveness is the root!

For the Believer, "almost no concept is more important to the Christian faith than Forgiveness." The Gospel itself is a message about God's forgiveness!

The Assumption in Scripture is that we will offend each other. The Expectation in Scripture is that we will forgive each other!

This is seen in no greater way than in the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant in Matthew 18.

I. Forgiveness is to Settle the Account

Matthew 18:23-27 (NASB)

For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants.

II. Forgiveness is designed to remind us of our Account.

Matthew 12:28-30 (NIV)

"But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. 'His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.' "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt."

How is it that this man failed to exercise the same forgiveness that had been shown to him?

III. Failing to FORGIVE invokes Godly Justice

Matthew 8:32-35 (NASB)

The lord said to him, You wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me, should you not also have had mercy on your friend, in the same way that I had mercy on you? Moved with anger, he handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him. My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart!"

The point is, if Christians don't forgive others, it invokes God's Judgment!

This judgment is Godly Discipline. But Godly discipline isn't designed to punish, but Instruct!

Genuine forgiveness is not given begrudgingly, it involves the refusal to hold guilt over the person who offended us.

It requires a choice to not let bitterness take root, a laying aside of anger, and a choice to not dwell on the offense that was committed.

Jesus' lesson is not to the one who offended you, His message is about YOUR HEART!

A. But what if I still struggle to forgive, or the person has no desire to REPENT?

It is helpful to understand that FORGIVENESS involves both an Attitude and an Action.

Our decision should drive us to not get bitter or angry or revengeful about the person's offense..., our ATTITUDE should be cultivated by our choice, driven from our heart.

And the ACTION of forgiveness is actually granted ONLY when someone asks for it!

Ephesians 4:31-32 (ESV)

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

This Teaching that Jesus gives to us is LAW for the church, and is to be a MODEL for those we have dealings with outside of the church.

Some of you may have been physically, mentally, or emotionally harmed by someone who is Outside the church, or even worse, someone who "claimed" to be a Believer.

It seems very difficult to consider Forgiveness; and this kind of word still Offends you to this day!

Jesus was primarily giving us teaching for INSIDE the walls of the church, but it's not exclusive!

Forgiveness and Healing to certain types of Offense may take a lot of prayer, counseling, and time to complete the process.

But know in entering into that process, it's NOT about you freeing the other person. it's about you FREEING yourself!

You are pulling up the ROOT of Bitterness and allowing the Holy Spirit to plant a new garden in your soul!

Romans 5:8 (NIV)

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Don't let this KRYPTONITE weaken you any longer!