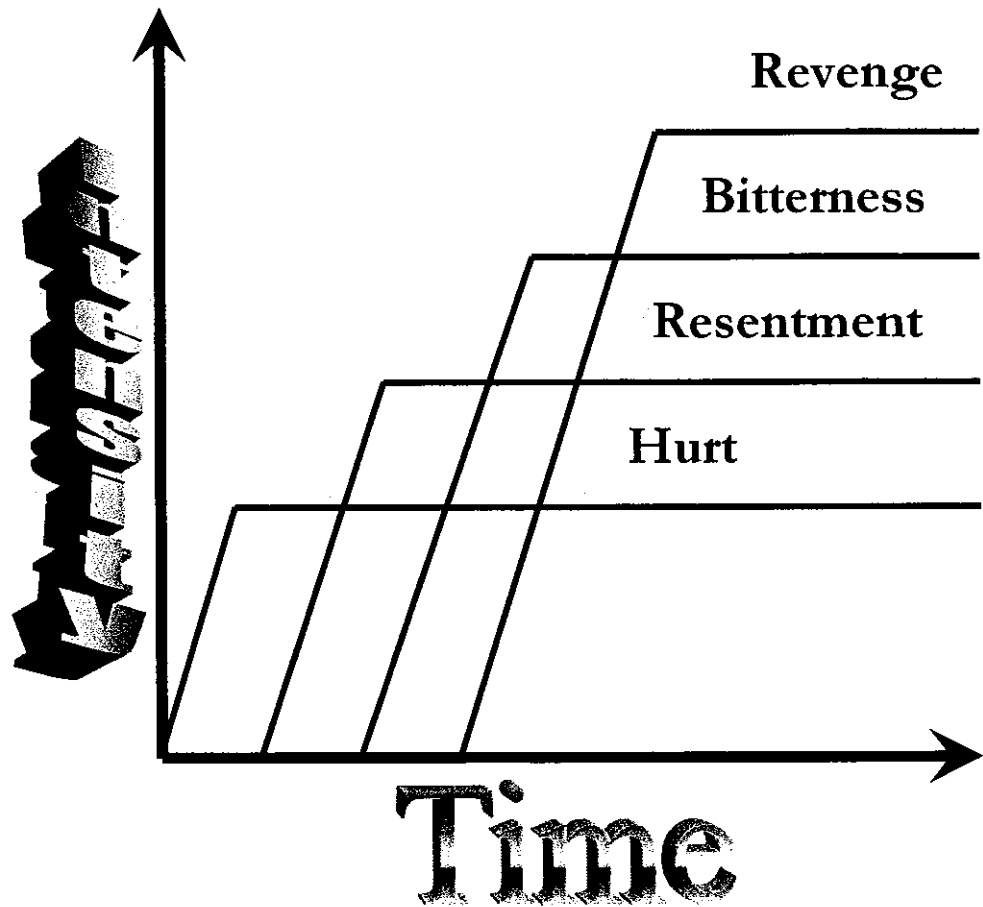
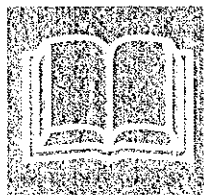


Bitterness vs. Forgiveness

1. Have you ever been hurt? Yes or No
2. How did you handle that hurt? _____





Hebrews 12:14-16

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

1. Follow peace with how many men? _____
2. If you allow a root of bitterness to spring up:
 - A. What happens to you? _____
 - B. What happens to others? _____
3. **Bitterness ties to immorality.**



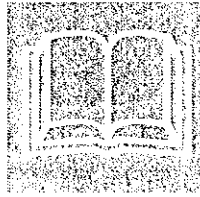
Romans 12:17-19

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

1. Are we to return evil for evil? Yes or No
2. How many men are we to live at peace with? _____
3. Is this possible? Yes or No
4. Whose responsibility is it to get revenge? _____

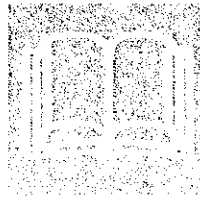


Romans 12:20,21

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

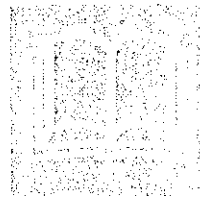
1. If your enemy hungers? _____
2. If your enemy thirsts? _____
3. What does it mean to heap coals of fire on your enemies head? _____
4. How do we overcome evil? _____



I Peter 2:20

20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. (NIV says commendable before God)

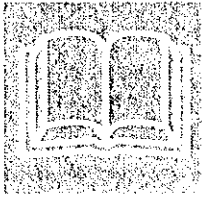
1. How does God respond when we do the right thing and suffer for it? _____



I Peter 2:21

21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

1. What are we called to? _____

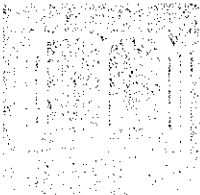


I Peter 2:22

22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

1. What usually causes us to suffer?

_____ or _____
_____ or _____



I Peter 2:23

23 Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously:

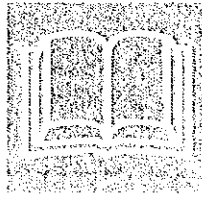
1. When insulted what was Jesus response? _____

2. When Jesus suffered what was His response? _____

3. What did Jesus do? _____

4. Can God be trusted to deal with those who have hurt you?

Yes or No

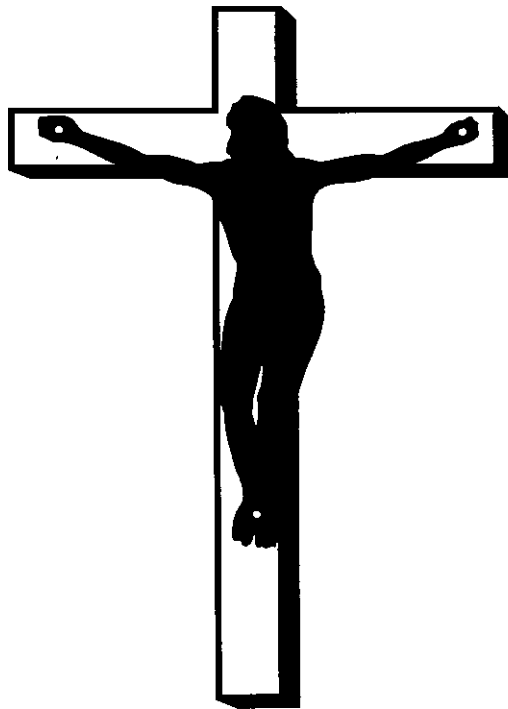


I Peter 2:24

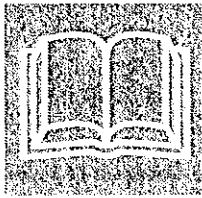
24 Who His own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1. What did Jesus do with our sins? _____

2. If we are to follow this example of forgiveness what does it mean we must do when others sin against us? _____



We are never more like Jesus than when we choose to bear the consequences of another person's sin.



Ephesians 4:22-25

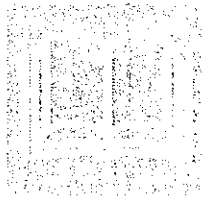
22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

1. Put off? _____
2. Renew your? _____
3. Put on? _____



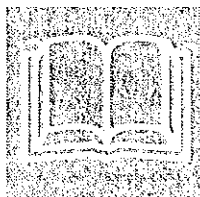
Ephesians 4:26,27

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27 Neither give place to the devil.

1. When we allow anger to remain what happens? _____

2. What does it mean to give place to the devil? _____



Ephesians 4:28-30

28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

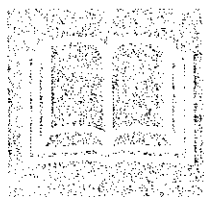
29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

1. How much corrupt communication should you let come out of your mouth? _____

2. What should your speech do? _____

3. What does it mean to minister grace to the hearers? _____

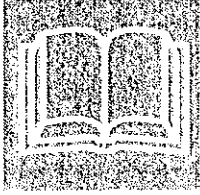


Ephesians 4:31

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

1. How much bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour and evil speaking is to be put away from us? _____

2. What is malice? _____



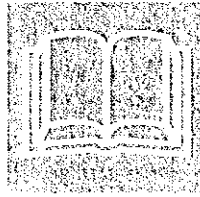
Ephesians 4:32

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

1. How has God for Christ's sake forgiven you?

Give descriptive words or phrases:

FORGIVENESS IS NOT
FORGETTING
IT IS *CHOOSING* NOT
TO REMEMBER THE
OFFENSE *AGAINST* THE
PERSON ANYMORE



Matthew 18:21,22

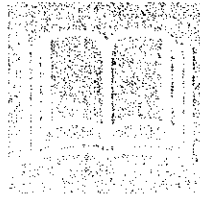
21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times: but, until seventy times seven.

1. Was Jesus saying that on the 491st time we don't have to forgive?

Yes or No

2. What was He saying? _____



Matthew 18:23-27

23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

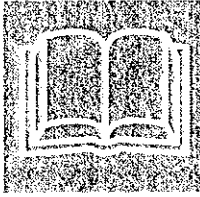
24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

AD32		
1 Talent	95 lbs. of silver	\$750.00
10,000 Talents	950,000 lbs. silver	\$7,500,000.00
2002		
1 Talent	95 lbs. silver	\$7,600.00
10,000 Talents	950,000 lbs. silver	\$76,000,000.00



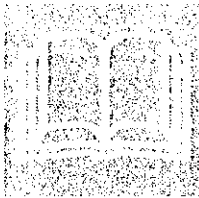
Matthew 18:28-30

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

AD32		
1 Pence	silver piece equal to 17 cents	\$17
100 Pence	silver piece equal to 17 cents	\$17.00
2002		
1 Pence	silver piece equal to \$1.70	\$1.70
100 pence	silver piece equal to \$1.70	\$170.00



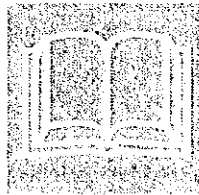
Matthew 18:31-33

31 So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?

1. Should he have had pity on the other man? Yes or No



Matthew 18:34,35

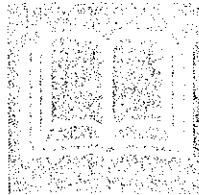
34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

1. What are the tormentors? _____

2. Have you ever felt the torment of bitterness? Yes or No

3. What does it mean to forgive from the heart? _____



II Corinthians 2:10,11

10 To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;

11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

1. What happens if you choose the path of bitterness? _____

Dealing with your bitterness

1. Pray and ask God to reveal to you all those who have offended you that you haven't forgiven from the heart.

Sample Prayer for Bitterness

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You for the riches of your kindness, forbearance, and patience knowing that your kindness has led me to repentance (Romans 2:4). I confess that I have not extended the same patience and kindness toward others who offended me, but instead I have harbored bitterness and resentment. I pray that during this time of self-examination You would bring to mind only those people that I have not forgiven in order that I may do so (Matthew 18:35). I ask this in the precious name of Jesus. Amen.

2. Make a list of people as well as their offenses.

Name

Offenses

_____	_____

_____	_____

_____	_____

Name

Offenses

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Now take the list you have made and one by one work through forgiving each one.

Remember:

Many people feel the pain of bitterness but refuse to acknowledge it. You must let God bring it to the surface so He can deal with it.

Don't rationalize or explain away the offender's behavior.

God has given you everything you need for life and Godliness so don't say "*Lord, please help me to forgive*".

Forgiveness is a choice so don't say, "*Lord, I want to forgive*".

Say:

Lord, I choose to forgive (name) for (be specific about each offense or painful memory) and I release (name) to you to judge righteously.

