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February 2022 “CONFESSION’S CRITICAL INGREDIENT”

Dear Friends,

Last month we studied the scriptural truth of faith and confession. In our study we read numerous passages about what we say and how it impacts our health, finances, ministry, family, mental state and more. The first passage we read was what Jesus said in Mark 11:22-24,

²²And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. ²³For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. ²⁴Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

Not only did we read numerous passages about the importance of confession, we also saw how Jesus healed, delivered and changed natural circumstances by just speaking. Jesus only did what God told Him to do, and He only taught what God told Him to teach. Therefore, it was God Who instructed Jesus to demonstrate the Father’s will for healing and deliverance by simply commanding healing and deliverance to manifest. When Jesus taught us to do the same, He did it because God told Him to proclaim the Kingdom key of confession.

Jesus set the example for Christians concerning faith and confession. What we confess must line up with God Word and His will. If our confessions are centered on the desires of self-increase, we will not experience a manifestation of what we speak. Furthermore, if our confessions are about forcing someone to do something against their will, God will never be in agreement with what we speak.

Along with confessing in line with God’s Word and His will, there is another, extremely critical aspect of confession and prayer that many Christians seem to dismiss. It is found in the verses following Mark 11:22-24,

²²And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. ²³For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. ²⁴Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

²⁵And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. ²⁶But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

I never cease to be amazed at the number of Christians who seem to totally ignore what Jesus said about forgiveness. It’s almost as if they think refusing to forgive is a non-issue with God. But if Jesus only taught what God wanted Him to teach, then Jesus’ words about forgiving are

coming straight from God. Furthermore, in Matthew 4:4 Jesus said we are to live by every word that God speaks. This means if we as Believers expect to see our prayers answered, our confessions produce results, and our lives blessed with all of God's promises, then forgiveness is not an option. Jesus' words are clear and straight to the point, ***if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.*** Keep in mind, this was an instruction specifically related to Kingdom living; in other words, this is an instruction to Christians.

I have no doubt that some reading this letter are struggling to forgive someone for an offense. And most likely, some are even bristling at the idea that they need to forgive someone who truly did them wrong. If what Jesus said in Mark 11:25-26 is not enough to convince you that forgiving others is not an option for Christians, consider the following passages.

³⁸Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: ³⁹But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. ⁴⁰And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. ⁴¹And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. ⁴²Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. ⁴³Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. ⁴⁴But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; ⁴⁵That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. ⁴⁶For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? (Matthew 5:38-46)

⁹After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. ¹⁰Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. ¹¹Give us this day our daily bread. ¹²And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. ¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. ¹⁴For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: ¹⁵But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

(Matthew 6:9-15)

²⁷But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, ²⁸Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. ²⁹And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. ³⁰Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. ³¹And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. ³²For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. ³³And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. ³⁴And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. ³⁶Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. (Luke 6:27-36)

³⁴A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ³⁵By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (John 13:34-35)

⁷Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. ⁸Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. ⁹He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. ¹⁰He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. ¹¹But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes. (1 John 2:7-11)

¹⁴We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. ¹⁵Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

²²And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. ²³And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. (1 John 3:14-15, 22-23)

⁷Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. ⁸e that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. ⁹In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. ¹⁰Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. ¹²No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. ²⁰If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? ²¹And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. (1 John 4:7-12, 20-21)

¹⁵If ye love me, keep my commandments. ²¹He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. ²³Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.
(John 14:15, 21, 23)

³¹Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: ³²And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.
(Ephesians 4:31-32)

²¹Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? ²²Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee,

Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven. ²³Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. ²⁴And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵But 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. ²⁶The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. ²⁷Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But 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. ²⁹And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. ³⁰And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. ³¹So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. ³²Then 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: ³³Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? ³⁴And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. ³⁵So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses. (Matthew 18:21-35)

Have you figured it out yet? It doesn't matter what a person has done to you, God has **COMMANDED** us to forgive. Maybe you've heard a Christian say something like, "I love them, but I just can't forgive them." That is an absolute lie. If they were being honest, they would say, "I don't want to forgive them, and I really don't love them." Get this straight: it is **IMPOSSIBLE** to love as God loves and not forgive.

God, in His Word which will never pass away, is telling us that if we do not forgive everyone who has done us wrong,

- He will not forgive us
- We are guilty of hating
- We are equal to a murderer
- We are in willing violation of His commandment
- We are a liar if we say we love but don't forgive
- We will be turned over to tormentors
- We are not the children of our Father in Heaven
- We are walking in the darkness of sin
- We do not have eternal life abiding in us

What else does God have to say? How can any Christian justify not forgiving others? Yes, the offense may be horrible, and the heartache and pain may be intense, **but forgiveness is NOT an option for a Christian desiring to spend eternity in Heaven.** Additionally, if we do not walk in love and forgive others, it will severely impact our ability to live by faith.

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. (Galatians 5:6)

As Christians, the testimony of our lifestyle is to be that which represents Jesus to others. We are to forgive others just as He forgave us. Some Christians may be shocked to learn that refusing to forgive opens the door to an attack of Satan. Consider what the Apostle Paul wrote:

¹⁰To 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; ¹¹Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

(2 Corinthians 2:10-11)

Knowing all of these things to be true, if we are hoping to see an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that leads to revival, we absolutely must obey God's commandment to love as He loves us and forgive as He forgives us. The beauty of this is that His life in us makes it possible to live daily in that level of love. Praise God, what a blessing to be loved by Him!

In His Grace,

Jim

For additional teaching on the subject of forgiveness and how it impacts our lives, use the form below to request a CD of the sermon, *The Deadly Nature of Unforgiveness*.

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