

HOW TO WALK IN LOVE

Love's First Move

Foundation Statement: Forgiveness is the first weapon of offense the believer fires in the love battle – I FORGIVE!!!

I. 2 Corinthians 2:7-Forgiveness is love's first move

- A. Everyday you'll have opportunities where something will happen and you can either to take offense or give forgiveness
 - 1. 5-They needed to forgive and had opportunity not to-This guy who committed incest was threatening the health of the church Paul was apostle over so certainly Paul had an opportunity to hold unforgiveness against him; This guy had caused a major problem in this church and certainly the people who made up that church had an opportunity to hold unforgiveness
 - 2. 6-The punishment was that his rights and privileges that he had in the church were taken away and this was done to bring him to repentance and it had done what it was designed to do; the man repented
 - 3. 7-Now the people are in a position where they need to forgive this guy; they need to let it go and apparently some are having a hard time doing so
- B. 10-11-If you hold unforgiveness you give Satan an advantage (because your faith won't work)
 - 1. *Phillips-Now is the time to offer him forgiveness and comfort, for it is possible for a man in his position to be completely overwhelmed by remorse. I ask you to show him plainly now that you love him. My previous letter was something of a test—I wanted to make sure that you would follow my orders implicitly. If you will forgive a certain person, rest assured that I forgive him too. Insofar as I had anything personally to forgive, I do forgive him, as before Christ. We don't want Satan to win any victory here, and well we know his methods!*
 - a. When is the time to offer forgiveness? NOW
 - 2. 11-The point here is that if we hold unforgiveness Satan is going to gain advantage over us and get victory over us; Why? If you hold unforgiveness, faith doesn't work, if faith doesn't work you can't overcome the enemy but will be overcome by him
 - 3. Satan is ever endeavoring to get your eyes off of him and what he's trying to do and get your eyes on flesh; he wants to make it so that in your mind it is about flesh and what they did or what they said and not about him so that he can get you to be offended, hold unforgiveness and gain the advantage – HEY YOUR FAITH IS ON THE LINE HERE

4. "You just need to be nice and love people," won't cut it where this love walk is concerned; It's going to require more violence than that, more intensity than that, more spiritual energy and capacity than that-Psalm 15:4

C. He doesn't just tell them they need to love him, he gives them strategy of how to do it

1. We've made it impossible for people to walk in love because we haven't taught them how to do it; we've told them what to do, but we haven't told them how to do it
2. Forgive first, comfort second and your love will be confirmed towards him (**Confirm**-Make it valid, establish it)
 - a. This forgiving and comforting is a confirmation of your love towards him and you'll notice the first act of love was forgiving; Forgiveness is the first act of love; he's talking about their love being confirmed, but the first act of love was to forgive
 - b. If you don't forgive first you can't comfort
 - 1) **Comfort**-Encourage, strengthen, exhorting and comforting and encouraging, to cheer, to give vigor, to invigorate

D. It's impossible to love someone whom you have not first forgiven

1. What does loving people look like?-1 Corinthians 13:4-It is patient, kind, it is not rude; Galatians 6:2-Love bears one another's burdens; Ephesians 4:32-It's kind, tenderhearted; Colossians 3:12-Love is merciful and compassionate, gentle and mild and it forbears
 - a. It is impossible to demonstrate that type of love to someone who you have not forgiven, to someone who you have marks against
 - b. It's these marks against people that keep us from loving people and as long as the marks are there loving them won't be possible
 - c. That's why it has seemed hard for some people to love certain people because they had marks against them and were trying to love them and if you'll get rid of the marks the love will then fall into place
2. Does anybody have any marks against their record in your mind?
 - a. You can't do stuff for them in love because there's marks against their record (You can't give to them, you can't be kind to them, you can't be patient with them because they have marks against their record)
3. Forgiveness puts you in a position from the which you can then love; With forgiveness in place and you can then be loving; From the place of forgiveness I can begin to love

II. Proverbs 17:9 (AMP)-He who covers and forgives and offense seeks love, but he who repeats or harps on a matter separates even close friends

- A. The way that you pursue this life of love and seek this life of love is you forgive – You want to seek love? You want to walk in love? This is how you do it, you forgive the offense – You pursue a life of love through forgiveness
1. Forgiving promotes love, fosters love, nurtures love, cultivates love
 - a. **Seek**-Seek to find; Seek to secure; To exact-Impose, administer, apply; Seek-To seek after, to make pursuit
 - b. *YLT-Whoso is covering transgression is seeking love and whoso is repeating a matter is separating a familiar friend*
 - c. *NLT-Love prospers when a fault is forgiven (Love excels when a fault is forgiven)*
 2. Harping on things people do that you don't like and faults that they may have will destroy your love walk while forgiving will cause your love walk to flourish
- B. Harping on the wrong and repeating it and holding on to it doesn't promote love because it's impossible to love someone who you have something against
1. Forgiving the offense promotes love because once you have forgiven them, then you can love them
 2. Forgiveness gives love room to go and room to grow; While taking offense and holding onto a wrong chokes love out
- C. People talk about division all the time and how we need to be on guard against division and it's true, but what causes division?
1. *NLT-Love prospers when a fault is forgiven, but **dwelling on it** separates close friendships*
 2. Dwelling on, harping on someone's fault or something you don't like about them or some wrong they have rather than forgiving creates division
 3. You're thinking about, you're harping on something you should be forgiving and letting go of and if you did forgive instead of harping on it you would foster love, you would nurture and promote love and love would prosper and increase
 4. Proverbs 18:19-A person takes offense because they harped on the fault and after that walls go up and what do walls do? They divide
- D. Repeating it and harping on it is the exact opposite of forgiving and letting go
1. *MSG-Overlook an offense and bond a friendship; **fasten on to a slight** and – goodbye friend!*
 2. *TLB-Love **forgets** mistakes; nagging about them parts the best of friends*
 3. *WYC-He that **rehearses** by an high word **separates** them that should be knit together in peace*
 4. *VOICE-Those who forgive faults **foster** love, but those **who repeatedly recall** them ruin relationships*

III. 1 Peter 4:8 AMP-Love forgives and disregards the offenses of others

- A. Above all things HAVE fervent Love – That means take it, lay hold of it, possess it
1. Have-To lay hold of a thing, possess, own, to hold, to have or hold in hand

2. There is some stuff that is yours and yet you still have to take possession of it
- B. There are other verses that tell you what love is, but this verse tells you what loves does; This verse describes intense and unfailing love for one another as forgiving and disregarding the offenses of others; This is what love does it forgives
1. This verse tells us to have love for one another and then it tells us how to do it – Forgive; It doesn't just tell us to love, it tells how to love
 - a. If you're going to have love for one another, then you're going to be forgiving
 2. The way we would know if you have love for one another is if you forgive and disregard the offenses of others
 - a. A major sign that you are not loving is that rather than forgiving and disregarding the offenses of others you are holding onto them, unforgiving, and harping on them
 - b. If you are a person who holds onto, harps on, clings to the offenses of others you are weak in love
 - 1) Weak in forgiveness = Weak in love
 3. This how you have a real deep love for each other, "Love will forgive and disregard the offenses of others."
 - a. *Phillips-Above everything else be sure that you have real deep love for each other, **remembering how** 'love will cover a multitude of sins.'*
 4. Love wipes away others faults (that's forgiveness)
 - a. *CEV-Most important of all, you must sincerely love each other, because **love wipes away** many sins*
 - b. So if don't wipe away faults, but keep a record of them then you're weak in love
 5. Love doesn't look at others faults (that's forgiveness)
 - a. *ICB-Most importantly, love each other deeply. **Love has a way of not looking at others' sins***
 - b. If you like to look at and think about and harp on others faults you're weak in love
 6. Love makes you willing to forgive and that tells me that if you are really in love, then you are willing to forgive
 - a. *ERV-Most important of all, love each other deeply because **love makes you willing** to forgive many sins*
 7. Love will cause people to forgive and that tells me that if you are really in love that you will forgive
 - a. *NCV-Love **will cause people to forgive** each other for many sins*
 8. Of course love does other things, but if love doesn't forgive first it won't be able to do anything else
- C. How fervent your love is can be measured in how quickly and proficient you are at forgiving and disregarding others offenses
1. Fervent love is love that is stretched out, love that is constant it it's diligence and attention, Love that

has it's mind set on loving, Love that is zealous, Love that has real desire to love, Love that has it's attention fixed on love, Love that is passionate and enthusiastic about loving, Love that's eager in it's pursuit, Love that has a longing desire to love, Love that presses and bears on and is urgent, Love that is warm, earnest, excited, animated and glowing

2. When you are forgiving quickly and consistently and lavishly that reveals to me that love is flourishing in your life, love is growing in your life, love is strong in your life
3. **Fervent**-Stretched out, Assiduous-Constant, constant diligence or attention; Intent-Eager in pursuit of an object, Having the mind strained or bent on an object; Earnestly-Zealously, With real Desire, With fixed attention, Eagerness; Ardent in the pursuit of an object, Eager to obtain, Having a longing desire, Pressing, Bearing on, urgent; Fervent-Ardent; Very warm; earnest, excited, animated, glowing