



CHAPTER 18

Forgive and Forget

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("Rafe")

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It's Your CHOICE – Forgive and Forget

FORGIVE AND FORGET

You must be quick to forgive your spouse. Forgiveness also involves a **CHOICE**. “He who covers over an offense promotes love” (Proverbs 17:9a). “Love covers over all wrongs.” (Proverbs 10:12b). “[Love] keeps no account of wrongs” (I Corinthians 13:5b). “Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.” (I Peter 4:8).

We are admonished by the Lord Jesus Himself to forgive others. In Matthew 6:12, as a part of the model prayer, Christ prayed, “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” Note carefully that immediately following said model prayer Jesus continued by saying, “For IF you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do NOT forgive men their sins, your Father will NOT forgive your sins.” Jesus gave us the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant in Matthew 18:21-35. Jesus applied the truth of this parable about forgiveness when He said, “This is how My heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother **from your heart**.”

God declares the wonderful results of expressing love by covering and forgetting matters. By contrast, a failure to forgive is like a cancer and it continues to rot and to become more deep seated. There have been numerous times I have counseled with people experiencing marital problems who have brought up transgressions of one spouse against the other that had occurred many months or years earlier. The failure to forgive had led to bitterness which in turn had driven a wedge between the two. It can cause resentment and ultimately can destroy a marriage.

Be very quick to apologize when you are wrong. Seek forgiveness from your spouse so there will be quick restoration of the relationship. Your forgiveness must be as complete as God's forgiveness which is infinite forgiveness and total removal of our transgressions. “As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:12). “For You have put all my sins behind Your back” (Isaiah 38:17b). “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more” (Jeremiah 31:34b).

Past transgressions, hurts or mistakes of your spouse must not be placed in some type of contingency drawer to be pulled out and thrown in the face of your spouse when you feel there will be need for some ammunition. Make no provision to be armed for conflict with your spouse. You are not at war with your spouse.

After working up a sweat or after being in very hot temperatures for an extended period of time, that shower feels so good. It is great to be refreshed and clean. One of the sweet blessings of being a Christian is that after we have confessed our sins and have truly repented, our heavenly Father cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Our record of sin is expunged and clear. God's forgiveness is so complete that he even cleanses our conscience so that we can be released even from any feelings of guilt (Hebrews 9:14). We are to forgive others in the same way that God has forgiven us. More specifically, we must forgive our spouse in the same way that God has forgiven us. You must **CHOOSE** to expunge your spouse's record completely. You must **CHOOSE** to make your spouse clean in your eyes of any unrighteousness and to allow your spouse the sweet cleansing shower of your genuine forgiveness. You are loving your spouse in a

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godly way when you give your spouse the freedom to not only be declared clean from a transgression but also to have his/her conscience feel clean as well.

You will be blessed when your spouse forgives you in that way... You must **CHOOSE** to give that forgiveness to your spouse. It will be important to your happy marriage.