

Soul Ties and Spiritual Strongholds



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Basic Introduction to Soul Ties

What a soul tie is

The Bible speaks of what is today known as soul ties. In the Bible, it doesn't use the word soul tie, but it speaks of them when it talks about souls being knit together, becoming one flesh, etc. A soul tie can serve many functions, but in its simplest form, it ties two souls together in the spiritual realm. Soul ties between married couples draw them together like magnets, while soul ties between fornicators can draw a beaten and abused woman to the man which in the natural realm she would hate and run from, but instead she runs to him even though he doesn't love her, and treats her like dirt. In the demonic world, unholy soul ties can serve as bridges between two people to pass demonic garbage through. I helped a young man not too long ago break free from downright awful visitations from demons, all due to an ungodly soul tie he had with a witch. The man was a Christian, and the only thing that allowed her to send demonic torment his way, is through the soul tie. Other soul ties can do things such as allow one person to manipulate and control another person, and the other person is unaware to what is going on or knows what is going on, but for no real reason, allows it to continue.

How soul ties are formed

Here are some ways which soul ties are formed:

Sexual relations: Godly soul ties are formed when a couple are married (Ephesians 5:31, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh."), and the Godly soul tie between a husband and the wife that God intended him to have is unbreakable by man (Mark 10:7-9). However, when a person has ungodly sexual relations with another person, an ungodly soul tie is then formed (1 Corinthians 6:16, "What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh."). This soul tie fragments the soul, and is destructive. People who have many past relationships find it very difficult to 'bond' or be joined to anybody, because their soul is fragmented.

Close relationships: King David and Jonathan had a good soul tie as a result of a good friendship (1 Samuel 18:1, "And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."), but bad soul ties can form from bad relationships as well. Idolizing somebody can cause a bad soul tie.

I have heard too that you can create a soul tie with a rock group by becoming obsessed with their music. Which explains the strong pull towards certain music that seems almost irresistible.

Vows, commitments and agreements: Vows are known to bind the soul (Numbers 30:2), marriage itself consists of vows and binds the two people together (Ephesians

5:31), therefore I have little reason to overlook the concept of vows or commitments as being a means to create a soul tie.

How to break a soul tie

1. If any sins were committed to cause this soul tie, repent of them! Fornication is perhaps one of the most common ways to create nasty soul ties.
2. If gifts were given to you by the other person in connection with the sin or unholy relationship, such as rings, flowers, cards, bras, etc. I would get rid of them! Such things symbolize the ungodly relationship, and can hold a soul tie in place. If you are still friends or in a relationship (just now it's no longer an ungodly relationship), like say a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship, except you've repented of and forsaken the unholy practices you used to do in your relationship, then I don't feel it is necessary to destroy all the gifts and things that you have been given. I would still encourage you to get rid of anything that symbolizes the ungodly practices in the relationship though, such as if a guy gives a girl a bra and panties with his initials on them during fornication. I wouldn't encourage you to hang on to such things that symbolize sin or that are wrong to give each other before marriage. Things such as flowers and love letters given during an adultery should be destroyed.
3. Any rash vows or commitments made that played a part in forming the soul tie should be renounced and repented of, and broken in Jesus' name. Even things like "I will love you forever", or "I could never love another man!" need to be renounced. They are spoken commitments that need to be undone verbally. As Proverbs 21:23 tells us, "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles." The tongue has the ability to bring the soul great troubles and bondage.
4. Forgive that person if you have anything against them.
5. Renounce the soul tie. Do this verbally, and in Jesus' name. Example, "In Jesus' name, I now renounce any ungodly soul ties formed between myself and _____ as a result of _____ (fornication, etc.)."
6. Break the soul tie in Jesus' name! Do this verbally using your authority in Jesus. Example, "I now break and sever any ungodly soul ties formed between myself and _____ as a result of _____ (fornication, etc.) in Jesus' name."

Strongholds

The process of deliverance often consists of three main parts: Tearing down strongholds, removing legal rights and then casting out the remaining demons. If you try to cast out demons without taking away the strongholds or legal rights that they are holding onto, then you can't really expect to achieve a complete successful deliverance. Removing these two blockages is vital in going about a complete and successful deliverance.

What is a stronghold?

A stronghold is a faulty thinking pattern based on lies and deception. Deception is one of the primary weapons of the devil, because it is the building blocks for a stronghold. What strongholds can do is cause us to think in ways which block us from God's best. For example, if you think you have to confess all your sins to everybody you've ever wronged, you'll feel just awful and guilty until you do all that, and even then, you'll probably feel guilty, because you probably forgot many people that you didn't confess your sins to. All unnecessary, and a waste of time, all because you were deceived and thought that you had to do something that you really didn't have to do.

An example of a stronghold at work: A common scene is somebody who is scared of God, and has a hard time feeling His love and presence. They view Him as a cruel taskmaster, and not as the God that is really is to them, and therefore, they put up their own wall which makes it hard for them to receive God's love, presence and draw close in their relationship with Him. If you saw your spouse as a rude and cruel dictator, you probably wouldn't be as apt to snuggle up to Him and love him as you would if you saw him as a loving and kind person who loves you and cares for you. If you see somebody as mean, it's hard to receive their love, isn't it? That's how our perception of God can hinder us from feeling His love and presence in our lives. It is VERY important to have a correct perception of God if we want to live victorious lives in Christ Jesus!

Two very destructive and common strongholds

The first one, where you see God incorrectly: One of the most popular and devastating strongholds to have, is an incorrect image in your mind of who God is, and how He sees us. People who see God as a taskmaster, live their lives with an unhealthy fear of God. There's a good kind of fear of God, which is more like a holy respect for Him, but there's another kind of fear that is very unhealthy that the enemy wants us to have, and it's the kind of fear where we see God as a taskmaster, cruel, cold, distant, uncaring and would snap the whip at us the moment we step out of line. People who are afraid they've committed the unpardonable sin are almost guaranteed to have this stronghold. People who find it hard to feel God's love and presence, often have this stronghold too. If you feel God is distant and cold, or question if God loves you, then you need to get this stronghold torn down.

The second one, where you see yourself incorrectly: People who suffer from this have a hard time seeing the new person that they are now in Christ Jesus, and often suffer from low self-esteem. They don't understand what Christ did for them, and how it applies to their own life. Common symptoms of this stronghold are guilt feelings (questioning if you've really been forgiven of your sin(s)), low spiritual esteem (they feel like sinners, not saints), they lack spiritual confidence that we are supposed to have in Christ Jesus, they may still struggle with sin (Jesus said that if you keep in His Word, which tears down strongholds, you will be free from the power sin has over you - John 8:31-34), and overall you don't feel 'worthy' spiritually and lack the joy of the Lord in your life.

How to tear down a stronghold

2 Corinthians 10:4, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds."

Strongholds are birthed and dwell in deception (which are lies and false beliefs), so naturally the cure is to bring the truth in God's Word on the scene. You debunk the lies of the enemy, with the truth, which is in the Word of God! The Bible says that our weapons are mighty for the tearing down of strongholds (2 Cor 10:4, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds."). What is our primary offensive weapon? The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph 6:17, "...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."). Truth dispels deception and lies, and therefore the more truth you bring into a situation, the more the darkness must flee. This is where it's important to grow in God's Word, is because it is your primary weapon for tearing down the strongholds of deception that the enemy has been feeding you.

In John 8:31-36, Jesus tells us that we can be held in bondage due to strongholds in our lives. And His solution was to, "continue in my word... and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (v. 32-32) Strongholds are torn down as we meditate on God's Word, which is truth!

Spiritual Warfare versus Torment

A lot of Christians get demonic vexation (oppression, harassment, torment and troubling by evil spirits) and spiritual warfare confused. Many of God's children live their lives being troubled by evil spirits simply because they think it's normal and consider it spiritual warfare. I have news for you, I see people break free from what most people live their lives battling with, because they recognized the vital difference and sought the help they needed to break free! Notice that Jesus went about healing (setting free and making whole) ALL who oppressed of the devil (Acts 10:38)? That tells us clearly that it is not 'normal' to be tormented, oppressed or harassed by evil spirits!

What spiritual warfare involves

Spiritual warfare involves three key elements:

1) Temptation: It is normal for a believer to be tempted to sin. James 4 tells us how to deal with temptation, and it's by resisting the devil and drawing near to God. As you do that, the power of temptation will seize.

If you do as James 4 tells us, feeding yourself spiritually by setting aside a steady devotional time each day with God, and do your best to resist the temptations, but you just cannot overcome it, then I suspect demonic bondage. It is not uncommon for people to be held in bondage to things such as uncontrollable anger, or addictions such as pornography as a result of demonic influence.

2) Accusations: This is where the enemy tries to continually badger us with our past, or even things that aren't even true. The enemy tries to drive us into the ground

spiritually via means of guilt and shame. If you've confessed your sin(s), then they have been washed away by the blood of Christ, and there's no need to look back. As a matter of fact, we are told NOT to look back! Philippines 3:13, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." Satan is known as the accuser of the brethren (Revelations 12:10), and is known for trying to drag a person through their past to pull them down.

3) Deception: The enemy is always trying to get us to believe his lies. What's the first thing he did with Eve? He tried to deceive her into thinking that God lied and she would not surely die if she ate of the tree. I see the enemy deceiving many people today into believing they are merely forgiven sinners, and not the heavenly saints that they really are. I see the enemy trying to deceive people into believing there is no hope for them, or that God is angry with them (even after they turned from their sin and repented of it). It is not uncommon for a person to have a hard time accepting the fact that they are forgiven, because the enemy has been constantly telling them that they messed up too much to be forgiven.

The difference between torment and warfare

Warfare: Physical warfare involves sending fiery darts (or bullets) towards your opponent, and they send fiery darts (bullets) back your way. The same is true with spiritual warfare; the devil throws fiery darts your way in the form of temptations, accusations and deception, and you fire fiery darts his way by tearing down his strongholds. Your enemy cannot gain access to you when you are properly guarding yourself and letting his fiery darts hit you.

Torment: In war, there are prisoners of war (POW), those held captive by the enemy for purposes of torment, torture, and sometimes even death. The enemy has gained the power or ability to torture the victims. The same happens in the spiritual battleground, people fall for temptation, sin, and then fall into the enemy's hands. Paul tells us not to give place to the devil in Ephesians 4:27, and in 2 Corinthians 2:10-11, we are told not to hold unforgiveness in our hearts, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us (gain a 'right' to harass or use us): for we are not ignorant of his devices."

Those fighting the war can expect to be thrown temptations, deceptions and accusations, but if they find themselves being tortured by the enemy as a POW, then it's time to step back and figure out what is going on and seek help to break free.

How spiritual warfare can bring a person into bondage

If spiritual warfare is not properly fought (we take the bait), it can be a tool the enemy uses to bring us into bondage or give him grounds in our lives.

Temptations lure us into opening a door for the enemy. If we take the bait and sin, a door is open for the enemy to gain access into our lives.

Accusations can open the door to the demonic if we let it, because it's goal is to pull a person down spiritually and cause them to hold their past against themselves, which is

unforgiveness and as many of us know, unforgiveness is a full blown 'legal right' to the demonic.

Deception is where the enemy can try to torment us through our thought lives, and cause us to believe things that are not true. If you believe you don't have enough gas in your car to make it off the freeway, suddenly you begin to seriously worry, even if the gas tank is full you will worry because of what you're believing or thinking. You believe the tank is empty when it's really full. The enemy often tries to deceive people into believing that God doesn't love them, when in reality, God's love for them is so rich that He sent His son Jesus to die for us! You can't demonstrate your love for somebody in a much stronger and real way than laying down your life for them. As Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

The truth is, deception only torments a person to the degree that they allow it to when they listen to what the enemy has been feeding them.

A brief look at strongholds

A stronghold is an incorrect thinking pattern and is formed when a person pays attention and listens to the deception the devil feeds them. Demons thrive on strongholds and love to use them to play havoc on our minds. An example of a stronghold is when a person sees God as a cruel distant taskmaster, rather than the loving Father that He really is. Out of that faulty thinking pattern, many fears are given birth to, such as fear of being hopeless, fear of God being mad or angry with you, etc. Another common stronghold is when a person sees themselves incorrectly; even though they have been bought with a price and washed in the Blood of the Lamb, they still see themselves as dirty old sinners saved by grace, and therefore don't have a close relationship with their heavenly Father, because they feel unworthy to be in His presence. The result? A poor relationship with their heavenly father, feelings of guilt, worthlessness, shame, and the list goes on. In other words, they live 'defeated' lives because they see themselves wrongly. Demons are not afraid to use strongholds to their advantage and cause much torment through them.

Conclusion

Spiritual warfare is real and can cause some torment through deception if a person takes the bait and listens to what the enemy has been telling them, but it by no means explains all the things that many people write off as simply spiritual warfare. I see people quite often claiming that they are in spiritual warfare, when their bondage far exceeds the torment that spiritual warfare could ever bring them! Even the torment that spiritual warfare can bring a person through deception is very uncalled for, and we are supposed to overcome it, not struggle with it.

We are to wrestle against temptations, accusations and deception, but NOT torment, vexation, and trouble from evil spirits. I believe it is also important to mention that often strongholds (deception that took hold) and demonic bondage often work hand in hand, and it is not uncommon to minister to people who need to tear down strongholds and have demons driven out. If you seem to face an immovable mountain

even after tearing down strongholds and guarding yourself against the 3 elements of spiritual warfare, then it's time to seek a deliverance.

Torment from evil spirits is not called for, it is not supposed to be lived with (tolerated), and there are Biblical ways to be completely set free from it. Notice that throughout Jesus' ministry here on earth, He went about setting free ALL who were oppressed (harassed, vexed, tormented, troubled, etc.) by evil spirits! (Acts 10:38)

Demonic legal rights

The process of deliverance often consists of three main parts: Tearing down strongholds, removing legal rights and then casting out the remaining demons. If you try to cast out demons without taking away the strongholds or legal rights that they are holding onto, then you can't really expect to achieve a complete successful deliverance. Removing these two blockages is vital in going about a complete and successful deliverance.

What are legal rights?

A legal right is something that can give demons an opportunity to enter or harass us, or gives them the right to remain in us even when we try to cast them out. Some of the most common legal rights that are faced when ministering deliverance are:

Sins (especially willful sins): When we commit sin, it gives the enemy a legal right to affect or bother us in one way or another. The deeper the sin, the bigger the door that is opened to the devil. When a person allows unholy thoughts to enter their mind, it can open the door to a demon of lust, which eventually causes the person to commit adultery and the matter is compounded. It starts when the enemy tempts us to think the wrong thing, then when we accept it and make it a habit, it opens the door for the enemy to move in further, then behind the bad habit which can be formed, lies a demonic compulsion that isn't easily resisted. If the person continues down this path, he continues to open more doors to the enemy, and eventually that person finds himself committing adultery, rape, etc. because the feelings and desires the demons push on that person are irresistible. Once he commits those sins, mega doors are then opened, and the problem is like a snowball going down the hill. Sin opens the door to demons, which push us in the direction to more sins, which open us wider to more demons, etc.

The remedy? Repentance! Verbally confess and repent of your sins that have given the enemy legal rights in your life. If you recognize a particular sin or sins that has opened the door to the bondage you are seeking deliverance from, it helps to specifically repent of that sin. Any larger or gross sins you can remember are always good to repent of specifically.

1 John 1:9 tells us to confess our sins. If we don't confess our sins and instead we hide them from God, it leaves that sin remaining in our lives. We need to confess our sins in order to be forgiven.

Soul ties: It is possible for two persons to share spiritual ties (like spiritual bridges that connect the two persons). Some of the most popular and destructive soul ties are formed during an adultery or fornication. 1 Corinthians 6:16 warns us not to have sexual relations with a prostitute because we become one flesh (flesh as in soul realm kind of flesh, not a physical flesh) with that person. This ungodly soul tie is like a rope between two persons that demons can use to their advantage to cross from one person to another. If that person had demons tormenting them, and you had sex with them, it unites the two persons, and therefore a soul tie is created, and the demons tormenting that person can also have rights to torment you. This does not apply to married couples, because there is no unhealthy soul tie created from sex within marriage. The Bible says that the marriage bed is un-defiled, and defilement is required to create an evil soul tie.

The remedy? Repentance, renunciation and breaking of soul ties! First, specifically repent of the sin which caused the soul tie to be formed in the first place. Then you can use your authority in Jesus to break and sever the unholy soul tie. Saying something like this should do the job, "I now renounce, break and sever all unholy soul ties created between myself and _____ through the act of adultery in Jesus' name!"

There can also be soul ties between yourself and another person, without any sexual relationship involved. Sexual relationships are one of the best way to create a very strong soul tie, but it's not the only way. Other soul ties can be created through unhealthy relationships, such as being so close to a parent that you take their advice over God's advice. Again, repentance and the breaking of the soul ties in Jesus' name is the way to go about solving this problem.

Another thing that could hold back the breaking of a soul tie, is a physical object given to you from the other person, through a sinful relationship. If you were given a ring, or bra or a love gift through an adulterous relationship, for example, then those gift(s) can hold the soul tie together. If the gift is valuable, and not necessarily bad in itself, then it's best to sell the gift. If the gift is demonic or unholy, then it's best to throw away the gift.

Demonic vows: A demonic vow can be like a spiritual signature that the enemy uses as a legal right to gain access into our lives. Demonic vows can be made consciously or unconsciously. Often when a person joins a cult coven (a group of witches), they are required to make vows with the devil. Demonic vows can be made unconsciously just by dabbling with the occult. Just by getting curious about the occult and reading forbidden materials (including horoscopes) can give the enemy your spiritual signature; it tells the enemy know that your interested. Jesus warns us not to make any vows at all. The only vows I can see are practical and good are those made during a marriage ceremony.

The remedy? But if we have made vows that do not glorify God, then we should repent and renounce those vows verbally and seek God's forgiveness. Do this verbally, because vows are made verbally, breaking them is also done verbally.

Unforgiveness: When we don't forgive others, God won't forgive us. When God doesn't forgive us, it leaves our sins remaining, which can give the enemy legal rights into our lives. Read Matthew 18:23-35, and keep in mind that the tormenters they are referring to, are demons. The legal ground the enemy may be standing on to torment you may very well be rooted in unforgiveness! I've heard that the single most common reason that people aren't healed, is because they are holding unforgiveness in their hearts, and I believe it! Forgiveness is not an option; it's a necessity! See my study on "Unforgiveness: Poison" for a more in depth understanding of how unforgiveness works.

The remedy? Repent for holding bitterness in your heart against others, and make a solid choice to forgive those who have wronged you (also confirm your choice by verbally forgiving them), and release the bitterness and hurt from your heart against them.

Ancestral sins: When you involve yourself in the deeper sins or the occult world, you not only open demonic doors in your own life, but also in the lives of your children and grandchildren (Exodus 20:5). If your ancestors have committed gross sins or been involved in the occult, then it's a good idea to confess those sins (to the best of your ability... God knows your heart), and ask Him for forgiveness (Leviticus 26:40-42). Even though you personally aren't guilty of those sins, they may have caused curses in your life, and those curses need to be broken. Common ways to tell if ancestral sins are involved, is if your siblings or ancestors have experienced or are experiencing the same or similar problem that you are.

The remedy? The legal grounds have already been broken! If any spirits are remaining, they must be cast out.

Childhood rejection: Much demonic bondage is caused during childhood. For example, if a parent shows rejection toward their child, a spirit of rejection may enter.

The remedy? If you have been rejected by either your parents or somebody else, you must make a solid choice to forgive that person(s), and release the hurt in your heart against them. The spirit of rejection is usually present in this situations, and should be renounced.

Points of weakness: When the person experiences weakness, such as emotional shock, physical trauma, fearful experiences during childhood, and other areas to which the natural walls of defense in the physical, spiritual or emotional system of a person are weakened, it leaves us vulnerable for the enemy to attach himself to us. The same is true with drinking excessive amounts of alcohol, and especially true with drugs, because they lower our defenses, and since demons thrive on weakness, they love to move right in and setup camp.

The remedy? If there was any bitterness involved (say somebody caused the traumatic experience for you, and you are still holding it against them), then you must forgive the person who hurt you, and repent for harboring bitterness in your heart against them. If the point of weakness was caused by your own sin, such as drinking or drugs, then confess and repent of that sin. If the demons entered solely through

traumatic experience, and none of it was anybody's fault, then the demons are 100% trespassers in this situation, and need to be told to leave!

Spoken self-curses: The words we say have spiritual value, the Bible says to bless and not curse, and that the tongue has the power of life and death. If you walk around saying, "I wish I could just die," a demon may hear you and can go to God and say, "Look, she wants to die!" and here comes a spirit of death. There is a book titled, "Blessing or Curse: You can choose, " by Derek Prince, which deals with this topic of curses in much detail.

The remedy? Take back what you spoke against yourself, renounce it! Repent for speaking such thing(s), and break the curse(s) in Jesus' name!

Cursed objects: Physical objects can carry spiritual value, such as idols, occult books, rings, movies, charms, etc. If you brought any Indian or pagan religion artifacts into your home, you could be opening the door for demons to enter and bother the people within your home. Land can also become defiled by the sins of it's owners (Leviticus 18:27).

The remedy? Burn, destroy or get rid of any physical objects that you have located that could be cursed. Isaiah 2:18, "And the idols he shall utterly abolish." It is Biblical to burn cursed objects. Repent for bringing such objects into your home if you are responsible for them! Land can be cleansed by prayer and repenting of the sins of the previous owners.

Renounce demons: Renounce any known demons that have been invited in (ex. spirit guides), and any interest or involvement in the occult or Satanism. Also renounce any demons that you know need to be cast out. This helps let the demons know that you are no longer interested in having them around.

Other helpful things to look for: When did the bondage start? Try to pinpoint how the problem started and what gave the demons the ability to enter. Look for any involvement in the occult, sins, vows, traumatic experiences, etc. along with any unusual happenings emotionally, spiritually or mentally.

Condemnation versus Conviction

A lot of believers hear condemning thoughts, and some believers even think it's God telling them these things. My friend, nothing could be further from the truth! God NEVER tells you what a loser you are. Jesus said He came not to condemn the world, but to save it (John 12:47)!

What is condemnation?

Condemnation comes from Satan and is meant to tear you down. Condemnation continually points out what a failure you are, and how badly you've messed up. Condemnation is showing you the problem, but avoiding the solution.

Jesus did NOT come to condemn the world (John 12:47). There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1). Satan on the other hand is KNOWN for accusing the brethren (Rev 12:10).

Why won't you ever hear God telling you what a failure you are? Because Jesus said, "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." (John 12:47)

What is conviction?

Conviction is known in the Bible as Godly sorrow. God's Word tells us that Godly sorrow is what leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4). Condemnation tells you, "You are such a failure! Look at what you did!" while conviction tells you, "Come to me... and I will forgive you!"

Not only is God willing to forgive your sins, but He longs (deeply desires) to do so! Isaiah 30:18, "Therefore the LORD longs to be gracious to you, And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him." (NASB)

1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness."

Romans 2:4, "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

Conviction shows you the answer to your problem. Conviction shows you the blood of Jesus that wipes away your sins!

What is the difference?

Conviction shows you the answer (the Blood of Jesus, which washes away sin), while condemnation shows you the problem (the sin, the past and your failures). Condemnation shows you the problem, but conviction shows you the answer.

Condemnation shouts, "Your past! Your sins! You loser!" But conviction shouts, "The Blood of Jesus washes away sins! Come to Jesus and be forgiven of your sins! You can be forgiven! Your sins and past don't have to be a part of you anymore!"

Understanding the nature of God's forgiveness

It's so important to understand the nature of God's forgiveness and His desire to wash us clean from our pasts.

The power of your thoughts

The power of your thoughts - Where many strongholds begin

The enemy loves to put thoughts into the believer's mind. Those thoughts (if meditated on), produce strongholds, which produces feelings, which lands you into bondage... all because you listened to the devil more than your heavenly Father! I am going to use a common stronghold here in this teaching as an example... an incorrect perception of who you are in Christ. There are many other strongholds out there, but this teaching will give you a general idea of how many strongholds are formed.

How it works

Two voices are speaking: Satan likes to come along and tell you, "Look at that sin you did 5 years ago! That was so bad! You are such a failure!" But Jesus, through God's Word, tries to tell you that if you turn to Him, you will be forgiven (1 John 1:9), and your past will be forgotten: Isaiah 43:25, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

You are faced with a choice: You can either listen to Satan's lie that you are a failure, or you can listen to God's Word that tells you that your past has been washed away and you are a new creature in Christ! 2 Cor 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Whichever voice you listen to will crowd the other one out: If you have two dogs who fight all the time, and you can only afford to feed one of them, how do you know which one will win? The one you feed! The same is true in the spiritual realm. The more you listen to Satan's lies and deception, the more he will build strongholds in your mind, and the more strongholds that go up, the harder it will be to hear God's voice. The other side of the coin is true too... the more you feast yourself on the truth in God's Word, the more it tears down strongholds and makes it harder for the enemy's voice to penetrate your system.

If you listen to Satan's lies that you are a failure, he will continue to feed you that lie, and it will grow into a stronghold (a lie that is believed, or an incorrect thinking pattern). Your feelings are quite often a direct result of your thoughts. If you think you are a failure, you will feel like one.

If you listen to your heaven Father, who is speaking truth to you through His Word, you will begin to tear down the strongholds in your life. When you meditate on the truth in God's Word, it will become part of you, and before long, you will be feeling different, simply because you are exchanging lies of the devil for the truth in God's Word. When you believe that your sins are forgiven, you can then allow your conscience to be cleansed from dead works by the blood of Jesus: Hebrews 9:14, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

A practical example

Let me show you how many believers end up feeling like losers... guilt-ridden by their pasts. It all starts with a simple voice of condemnation from the enemy. Satan,

through his network of evil spirits (that's how the devil speaks to people, since Satan can't be everywhere at once), injects thoughts into their mind that remind them of their past and their failures. They begin to listen to his voice and agree with it. They did sin, and they failed. But instead of looking at the solution, which is repentance and the blood of Jesus (which washes away sin), they continue to listen to the enemy who keeps reminding them of their past. As they continue to do this, stronghold(s) are formed. A stronghold is an incorrect thinking pattern based on lies and formed in deception. Once a stronghold is in place, the person naturally thinks of their past instead of focusing on the fact that their past has been forgiven and wiped away. They believe they are a failure instead of believing the truth in God's Word, which tells them that they have been forgiven, washed clean, and even God Himself has chosen to forget their dirty past! So instead of feeling like a child of God who was washed clean in the blood of Jesus, they feel unworthy, guilty and consider them self a loser. What a shame for a child of God to feel that way!

Your thoughts can affect how you feel

When you believe something, it will affect your feelings. When you believe you are a failure, you will feel like one. When you believe you are a forgiven saint, you will feel like one.

The difference between a guilt-ridden Christian and a light-hearted and joyful Christian is often one simple thing... what they are thinking about. Guess who's thinking about the sin, the guilt and the past? Now guess who's thinking about how they have been washed clean and they are a new person in Christ Jesus?

Whatever you keep your mind on (think about often) will affect your whole being. Isaiah 26:3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

An exception to the rule: Evil spirits are known to directly affect our emotions, feelings, etc. King Saul was tormented with fear and depression directly. However, evil spirits often use our thoughts to access our feelings, and this is done through the creation of strongholds. This is what we are addressing in this teaching... how the enemy uses our thoughts to build strongholds, and how strongholds affect our feelings.

In a nutshell

Thoughts from the enemy (if listened to) turn into strongholds (lies believed or incorrect thinking patterns) which affect how you feel (your feelings often stem from your beliefs) and can cause you to remain in bondage to plain simple ignorance. Jesus made it clear that it's possible for a believer to remain in bondage to sin even after they've been set free, all due to ignorance of the truth in God's Word (John 8:31-36).

If you think you're a failure, you'll feel like a failure. If you think you're a new creation (washed clean from your past), you'll feel clean and new... alive in Christ!

Bitterness is a root!

Hebrews 12:15, "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."

What is a root? A root is a source, or a bubbling fountain that is laying under the surface. Roots do not directly manifest or make themselves known, but are a source of nutrition or fuel for other elements that are on the surface. You don't usually see a plant showing off it's root system, but if the plant didn't have a root system it wouldn't survive. A root's job is not to manifest on the surface, but to brew under the surface and fuel things that are on the surface.

Let's take a closer look at a plants root system... where does the roots dwell? Under the surface of the soil. Can everybody see it's root system? No, because it's hidden under the soil or surface. The same is true with bitterness in a person's soul. It is a hidden element that lies under the surface, and out of it springs up anger and other negative emotions against others and against the circumstances around us. People who have a root of bitterness find it easy to get upset over things that other's are doing around them. It's like a brewing fountain that lies beneath the surface, waiting to fuel something that is on the surface.

Bitterness can be kept to one's self

Countless women who are raped develop awful emotional and spiritual bondage. It's not because they were raped, but because they allowed the trauma to get to them. Many women are in bondage today because they became bitter under the surface about what was done to them years ago. I believe Clinton Clark once said that from his observation, it seemed that boys who are molested by older men and forgave the molester and forgot about it right away, walked away without picking up unclean homosexual spirits, but those who allowed the trauma to bother them walked away with homosexual spirits and other bondages. That's how the demonic spirits gain access into a person's life through rape and abuse. It's not the abuse or rape, but the bitterness and unhealthy feelings that build up within a person who has been taken advantage of. Demons thrive on bitterness and unforgiveness, and it's a wide open door for them to move right in on a person and develop many spiritual, mental and even physical bondages.

Now many of these people who have been hurt, don't express it on the outside, but rather hold the hurt and bitter feelings inside where they fester and grow. I know women who have been raped, and they are kind and gentle and loving people, but inside they are bound up because of what was done to them many years ago. Just because they aren't angry or outrageous individuals, does not mean they are free from the root of bitterness. As I said earlier, bitterness is a root, and roots are not always visible on the surface. They may promote ungodly anger and other emotions on the surface but bitterness itself works under the surface.

Bitterness is a root, thereby making it harder to identify and expose than many surface issues, but none the less it's a deadly poison that needs to be released. If left alone, it will grow and fester, and it has the ability to spring up many surface issues such as

irritability, anger, hatred, etc. Individuals who have a root of bitterness will often find it easy to become upset over little things that go on around them. It is easy for them to look at the circumstances around them as the source of their problems, rather than seeing how they are handling those circumstances. Instead of letting it go and forgiving, they let it get to them, and it devours them alive. This is a very common route by which demons enter people today.

Whether bitterness is manifest on the outside or not does not matter. Due to the nature of bottled up feelings and emotions, they are not always made noticeable on the surface, but that by no means discounts the fact that they are there. If there is a root of bitterness, it needs to be cut off at the root and removed from one's soul. We need to make a choice to release all hurt and bottled up feelings inside our systems, and repent for holding that poison in our hearts. Turn from those feelings and forsake them, and allow the Lord's love to minister to your soul!

Generational Curses

Have you ever seen a family where the father has a problem with uncontrollable anger, his son seems to have been 'handed it', and the grandpa had the same problem? Or have you noticed that not only do you suffer from something such as persistent irrational fears or depression, but your mother and her father also suffered from it as well? There are many people today who are living under bondage that the sins of their forefathers has brought them under.

Exodus 34:7, "Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting (punishing) the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation."

Lamentations 5:7, "Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne (been punished for) their iniquities."

This is beyond learned behavior; many children learn to be messy if their parents are messy. This is a spiritual bondage that is passed down from one generation to another. Some symptoms of a generational curse is a continual negative pattern of something being handed down from generation to generation. Often people who are adopted end up with the same characteristics as their birth parents, not because they were around their birth parents to learn how they behaved, but because they inherited their spiritual bondage. Some common symptoms of generational curses are family illnesses that seem to just walk from one person down to the next (cancer is a common physical manifestation of a spiritual bondage), continual financial difficulties (they continually hit roadblocks in their finances), mental problems, persistent irrational fears and depression. Anything that seems to be a persistent struggle or problem that was handed down from one generation to another may very well be a generational curse.

The purpose of a generational curse

I believe the reason God would punish the future generations with the sins of their fathers, is because of God's bitter hatred for sin. He would require somebody who practiced witchcraft to be put to death (Exodus 22:18). He knows that one of the most prized possessions you have, is your children, and therefore it makes sin a lot harder to commit when you realize that you are not the only one that is being punished for it, but also your own children are going to pay the price for your foolishness. That's what I believe is the reason behind generational curses. The whole human race fell thanks to Adam's sin for that matter.

The price for generational curses has been paid!

The good news is that once you accept Jesus, the transference of bondage stops from your ancestors by means of generational curses. You can no longer receive spiritual bondages in this manner from your parents once you accept Jesus!

Christ was made a curse, so we can be freed from the curses that sin (both our sins and those of our forefathers) has brought us. Galatians 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:"

Once you become a child of God, no longer will the sins of your forefathers cause curses to transfer into your life: Jeremiah 31:29-30, "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge."

So why are there so many believers who seem to be living under a generational curse? This has puzzled me before I understood how it works too. What may need to be dealt with though, is any bondage that was already passed down to you before you came into covenant with God. The legal grounds are certainly paid for on the cross and therefore broken. The only thing left to do is cast out any spirits that have gained entrance before you accepted Jesus.

Non-believers are still affected

Even after Jeremiah 31:29-30 makes it clear that believers are redeemed from generational curses, the next chapter in Jeremiah (32:18) clearly says, "Thou shewest lovingkindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the Great, the Mighty God, the LORD of hosts, is his name." Apparently, generational curses are still in effect, but for who is the big question.

Ezekiel 18:2-3 tells us, "What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel." (Note the keywords "in Israel"... this is referring to those who are in covenant with God, which are us believers, not the rest of the world.)

Obviously, generational curses are alive and well in the lives of those who are outside the new covenant with God (non-believers).

'Triggering' the effects of a generational curse

It is possible for demons to enter a child before he accepts Jesus, then remain dormant or hidden in that child's life until some time later in his or her life when it manifests (or makes itself known). Sometimes when a person heads for the ministry, it seems like the devil kicks up his ugly heels and causes havoc for that person. Other times, a line of fear runs in the family tree, but isn't manifested in a person's life until they get themselves involved in something fearful, such as watching a demonic movie. All of a sudden, the spirits in that person's life "come alive" so to speak, and make themselves known. They were there all along, but just now they have come out into the open. The solution is to cast them out.

If you have involved yourself in any sin or opened any doors in your own life while 'awaking' or triggering the spirits, then it's important that you clear up any legal grounds (or strongholds) that you gave the enemy in your own life relating to the bondage. For example, if you have went to see a demonic movie, and it seemed to have triggered spirits of fear in your life that were handed down to you, then it's important to repent for going to see such a movie before trying to cast out any spirits. It's also possible that you picked up the spirits from such a movie without them even being there in the first place, and/or added to spirits that were already inside you. It's always a good idea to clear up any legal grounds or strongholds in your own life before casting spirits out.

I believe unforgiveness is a great way to 'trigger' generational spirits, so I would be on the lookout for any bitterness or unforgiveness in your heart as well. A common sight is when a spirit of cancer is running down the family tree, and I believe bitterness is a great way to trigger those spirits. Unforgiveness is a serious sin that blocks the forgiveness of your own sins (Matthew 6:15), which creates ample legal grounds for the enemy in your life. Unforgiveness in itself puts us into the enemy's hands (Matthew 18:23-35), say nothing about awaking any evil spirits in us already!

The curse may be canceled, but the demons may remain

Just as other demons don't automatically leave at the time of salvation... neither do the demons that you get from your ancestors automatically leave you either.

Let's say that you accept Jesus at age 15. Because you were born a sinner and outside of God's covenant, you were still living under the curses handed down to you and demons can enter you through those curses. Once you've accepted Jesus, those curses are broken automatically, but often the demons that entered in before you accepted Jesus still need to be cast out. In other words, the curse is already broken, and there's no need for you to break any generational curses. But the demons who entered into you through those curses before you accepted Jesus may still need to be cast out. That's why it seems so many believers are living under generational curses, when the Bible makes it clear that we have been freed from any curses handed down from our forefathers!

My parents have almost perfect health well into their 60's, while it seems the family tree has many health problems that have been handed down from the forefathers. My parents seem almost immune from the health problems in the family tree! Sure, they take care of their bodies, but they also believe that they have been freed from the curses handed down in the family tree, and since no demons have entered them to take advantage of those old curses, they were freed from the effects simply by standing on what Jesus had done for them on the cross!

On the other hand, if demons have entered you through curses handed down to you before you became a Christian, then those demons may need to be cast out. Demons often don't leave on their own accord, and when they don't, the remedy to get rid of them is by casting them out.

There's a neat story in Mark 9:17-27, where Jesus deals with what is almost certainly a generational curse (verse 21). Notice that Jesus didn't have the boy confess the sins or iniquities of his ancestors, He cast out the demons that entered in through the curse. That's how I believe we are to deal with the affects of a generational curse; since the curse has been broken, all there is left to do is just cast the demons out that entered into that person's life back before they became a Christian (before the curse was broken).

Confess what is rightfully yours!

We know that our generational curses have been broken in Jesus' name, but I still like to verbally confess what is going on and what is rightfully ours anyways, because there's power in our verbal confessions, and helps us to realize that we are set free, and also lets the enemy know that he's in trouble! Here's a great sample confession prayer you can use to do just that:

In the name of Jesus, I confess the sins and iniquities of my parents (name specific sins if known), grandparents (name specific sins if known), and all other ancestors. I declare that by the blood of Jesus, these sins have been forgiven and Satan and his demons can no longer use these sins as legal grounds in my life!

In the name of Jesus, and by the power of His blood, I now declare that all generational curses have been renounced, broken and severed, and that I am no longer under their bondage!

In the name of Jesus, I declare myself and my future generations loosed from any bondages passed down to me from my ancestors. AMEN!

Another factor to consider

There are other things that can 'seem' like generational curses, but aren't. Perhaps the most common is if there is an ungodly soul tie formed between you and one of your ancestors, that can also allow for the transferring of spirits. There is more to learn on this subject in the teaching on Soul Ties.

Ignorance: Another source of bondage!

I also believe that some people can live under what SEEMS like a generational curse, simply because they believe it's still in affect! We need to know that it is NO LONGER in affect, and we have been FREED from any generational curses we used to live under! Jesus makes it very clear that we can be held in bondage to sin through ignorance (John 8:31-36), and I believe the same is true with bondage to generational curses.

In a nutshell

To wrap it up in a nutshell, I don't believe Christians can live under generational curses... but I do believe they can be affected by spirits that have entered through those curses before they accepted Jesus. Just like many people's past actions before they came to Christ have landed them in demonic bondage and caused them to pick up demons. Those demons are not automatically shed at the time of salvation, they often need to be cast out. The same is true with demons that enter in through generational curses (a doorway to demons).

How you deal with a spirit that has entered through a generational curse is very simple: Mark 16:17, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils..." Learn of the Spiritual Authority that Jesus has given you over demon spirits, and by faith, you can command those spirits to leave you in Jesus' name! If you can't seem to get them out, try prayer and fasting, as Jesus clearly stated, some demons won't come out unless you have a higher level of faith that only prayer and fasting can bring you into (Matthew 17:19-21). If you are facing heavier bondages, it is recommended to seek deliverance through a man or woman of God who is knowledgeable and working in the ministry of deliverance.

Another type of generational curse

The type of curses handed down as a result of an ancestors sin is automatically atoned for on the cross, providing we don't hide the sins of our forefathers in our hearts (holding sin in our hearts is never a good idea - whether its ours or the sins of our ancestors). But there's another kind of generational curse that is handed down, and it's a spoken curse that takes a toll on future generations as well. We can see this kind of curse in action in Genesis 9:24-25, "And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." As the Bible goes on to say, this curse ended up affecting an entire nation! I believe these kinds of curses may need to be renounced and broken. If you are unsure of whether a curse should be broken, I recommend breaking it anyways, just so you know it's broken. It doesn't hurt to break a curse that's already been broken. Here's a sample prayer you can pray that you can use to break yourself free from spoken generational curses:

In the name of Jesus, and by the power of His blood, I now renounce, break and sever all curses that have been handed down to me from my ancestors. In the name of Jesus, I now loose myself and my future generations from any bondages passed down to me from my ancestors!

Again, if a curse has landed on you and has been broken, it still doesn't mean you are delivered from the spirits that entered in through that curse. You may still need further deliverance to have the spirits cast out that took advantage of the curses handed to you.

Unforgiveness: Spiritual Poison

Unforgiveness is the single most popular poison that the enemy uses against God's people, and it is one of the deadliest poisons a person can take spiritually. It causes everything from mental depression, to health problems such as cancer and arthritis. I'm not saying that in every single case of cancer, it is due to unforgiveness, but I am saying that it can cause cancer. Cancer comes from the devil, scientist can't explain it, doctors don't understand where it comes from; it's the symptoms of a curse. God allowed the Israelites to face diseases and sickness when they disobeyed Him (Deut 28:58-61), and when they would turn back to Him, He would heal their land and take sickness from their midst (Exodus 23:25, Deut 7:15). In the New Testament, Jesus gave us two commandments (Matthew 22:37-40), and if we break those, we can be opened up to curses, just as the people in the Old Testament were. Jesus never came to abolish the law (Matthew 5:17), but He did come to set us free from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13), meaning, Jesus paid the price so we can be set free from any curses we may have come under.

Two commandments given to us by God

Matthew 22:37-40, "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Jesus gave us very important commandments to follow; one of them was to love one another, as He has loved us (John 15:12). Love is the exact opposite of unforgiveness, envy, jealousy, hate, pride and bitterness. You can't truly love somebody and hold bitterness or unforgiveness against him or her at the same time.

Our responsibility to forgive others

God sent His Son Jesus to die for our sins, so that we may be reconciled to Him, without spot or blemish. He asks that we give others the same forgiveness that paid for us. He tells a parable in Matthew 18:23-35 that says the same thing:

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

Unforgiveness shows we don't really love Jesus

In John 15:12, Jesus commands us to love one another, as He has loved us. True love doesn't hold bitterness or unforgiveness against that person. If we are bitter or hold unforgiveness against somebody, then we don't love them as Christ loved us. If we don't keep Jesus' commandments, then it proves we don't love Him.

John 14:24, "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings..."

Unforgiveness prevents God from forgiving our sins

Matthew 6:15, "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Unforgiveness opens us up to the tormentors (the devil)

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

Unforgiveness can block God from answering our prayers

Mark 11:24, 25, "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought (something) against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

Matthew 7:7, 12, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you... Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them..."

John 15:5, 10 tells us that if we abide in Christ, we will produce much spiritual fruit, and the way that we abide in Christ is by keeping His commandments. Verse 12 tells us that His commandment is to love one another as He has loved us. Verse 7 tells us that if we abide in Him (by keeping His commandments), and His Word in us, we can ask for anything and it will be given unto us! The reason a lot of people's prayers go unanswered, is because they aren't keeping the commandments that Jesus gave us; therefore they aren't abiding in Christ's love, and if we aren't abiding in Christ's love, how can we expect Him to hear our prayers?

Unforgiveness can defile a person

Hebrews 12:15, "...lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled."

Notice at the end it says, "many be defiled." This is a VERY common, if not one of the most common everyday things that defile people! Many bondages can be shed when a person forgives those who have wronged him or her.

Unforgiveness can give Satan an advantage

2 Corinthians 2:10-11, "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; Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

Unforgiveness can keep a person out of heaven

Matthew 7:12, 21, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets... Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

1 John 3:14, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. **He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.**"

Unforgiveness can prevent us from being fruitful spiritually

John 15:5 tells us that if we abide in Christ, we will produce much spiritual fruit, and the way that we abide in Christ is by keeping His commandments (verse 10). Verse 12 tells us that His commandment is that we love one another as He has loved us. Therefore, if we don't love one another, as He has loved us, then we do not abide in

Him, and how are we suppose to produce much spiritual fruit if we don't abide in Him? According to verse 6, the branch that doesn't abide in the vine will be cast into the fire.

Unforgiveness can open us up to curses

When people in the Old Testament disobeyed God's commandments, it opened them up to curses (Deut 27:26). When people nowadays disobey God, it can do the same thing; it can open them up to curses. Curses can cause mental and emotional problems (Deut 28:28), physical problems (Deut 28:35, 60, 61), financial problems (Deut 28:17, 38, 43), divorce and unfaithful spouse (Deut 28:30, 56), emotional stress (Deut 28:34), childlessness (Lev 20:21), and that's not all, plus those curses can be handed down to your future generations (Exodus 20:5).

The blessings of forgiveness

When we forgive, it opens us up to God's forgiveness (Matthew 6:15), it puts us in a receiving position when we pray (Mark 11:24, 25), it helps us become spiritually fruitful (John 15:10, 12, 5), and we will know that we have passed from spiritual death to being reconciled with our heavenly Father when we love each other (1 John 3:14)! When we keep God's commandments and love one another, we prove that we love Jesus (John 14:21), and we abide in Christ's love (John 15:10)! What a magnificent blessing forgiveness really is!!!

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