

THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY:
FULL FORGIVENESS – II Corinthians 13:5; Romans 8:6

Being Hurt, Wronged, Offended Is Not Optional – It Is a “Given” – Matt 5:11; Mk 4:17; Lk 6:22; Jo 15:20

- We live in a fallen world of self-referential (unloving) people – Judges 17:6; Ro 3:23
... “wrongs” = “evils” – I Cor 13:5
- Suffering and forgiveness are required courses in the school of Christ-likeness – I Pet 5:10; Ro 8:28-29
...suffering hurts, offenses affects every part of us – Ps 22:14; 31:9-10; 38:4-8; 102:5; Lk 22:44
- Handle them wrongly and we may grieve the Holy Spirit – Eph 4:30
...bitterness, keeping a record of wrongs – Eph 4:31; II Cor 5:19

We Will Respond in the “Flesh” or in the “Spirit” – Ro 8:6

- “flesh” – as though God and His love are not in me – II Cor 10:3
...self-destructive and other-destructive – Prov 14:12
- “spirit” – because God and His love are in me – II Cor 5:14; I Jo 4:11,16
...enter into His loving and life-giving peace – Prov 3:7-8
- Find ourselves free to move into God’s redemptive future – Phil 3:12-14; Rev 21:5
... “forgetting” is not erasure, it is liberty – Jo 8:32; Ga 5:1,13

To Forgive Is Christ-like... to Be Christ-like Is to Forgive – Eph 4:30-32; Col 3:12,13

- We start by receiving God’s full forgiveness of us in Christ – Ro 3:23; Ecc 7:20; I Jo 1:8
...God practices what He preaches – Ps 103; 2-5,10-12; Col 2:13; I Jo 1:9; 2:2,12; 3:5; 4:10
...He keeps no record of our wrongs – Is 43:25; Heb 10:17
- We acknowledge the offenses of others and our own hurts and pains – Ps 41:5-9; 55:1-5,12-14; 109:2-5
...the feelings, thoughts, temptations are not sins – Ja 1:2-4; Heb 3:13
- We confess and “put off” any unChristlike ways – Col 3:8; Eph 4:31
...which would only entrench the darkness, empower the evil one – I Jo 2:11; Eph 4:27
- We freely and fully give what we have freely and fully receive – God’s forgiveness – Matt 10:8
...to say “Yes” to forgiving is to say “no” to keeping a record of wrongs – I Cor 13:5
...we release by faith the full forgiveness of the Forgiver Who lives in us – Eph 4:32; Col 3:13; Ga 2:20
...we invest a “treasure” in the offender – Matt 5:4; Gen 45:9-11
(prayer – Matt 5:44; love – Lk 6:27; good deeds – Lk 6:27; Ro 12:20-21; blessings – Lk 6:28; Ro 12:14; I Cor 4:12)
...God’s love goes out to enemies as well as to friends – Ro 5:8-10

WE ENTER INTO THE REDEMPITIVE POWER OF GOD’S LOVE – I Cor 14:1; Gen 50:20