

# Ministries of Brotherly Understanding

Est. 2024

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Welcome members, supporters, sponsors and followers of the Ministries of Brotherly Understanding. This sermon will be about forgiveness.

Spiritual forgiveness refers to the act of releasing resentment and negativity towards someone. Seen as a deeply personal and spiritual practice that often involves connecting with a higher power or aligning yourself with a moral code, allowing for inner peace and healing by mirroring the merciful nature of the universe. It's considered a way to elevate one's spiritual growth and foster closer connection with the spiritual realm.

Unresolved conflicts, anger, or resentments are a persistent state of negative emotions. An example is like anger and bitterness stemming from past experiences, where someone feels wronged or hurt and has not adequately addressed or processed those feelings. This negativity can impact your relationships and overall wellbeing which affects your physical and mental health. This includes but is not limited to:

- Relationship problems
  - You might have difficulty maintaining a healthy relationship due to outbursts, distrust or emotional withdrawal
  - This could include your current and future relationships, as you carry your anger and resentment with you until you are ready to release this baggage.
- Risk of Heart Attack
  - Experiencing frequent anger and resentment can significantly increase your risk of a heart attack.
  - These emotions trigger physiological changes like increased blood pressure and impaired blood vessel function. These can lead to cardiovascular damage over time.
  - Essentially, chronic anger puts stress on the heart and raise's the likelihood of a cardiac event.
- Cholesterol levels

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- When angry, your body releases stress hormones such as adrenaline, and can trigger physiological changes that contribute to higher cholesterol known as LDL or bad cholesterol levels.
- Chronic anger can lead to unhealthy lifestyle choices like poor diet and lack of exercise and further contribute to high cholesterol.
- Sleep
  - When sleep is deprived, your prefrontal cortex which is responsible for decision making and impulse control will become less efficient and make it harder to manage anger effectively.
  - Sleep disruption can lead to elevated levels of your stress hormones, like cortisol, which can further exacerbate feelings of anger and aggression.
  - While poor sleep can trigger anger, harboring anger and resentment can also disrupt sleep patterns, creating a vicious cycle.
- Blood Pressure
  - Both suppressing anger and expressing anger excessively can cause higher blood pressure.
  - Repeated episodes of anger can lead to sustained high blood pressure or hypertension over time.
- Anxiety
  - This occurs when you experience significant worry and unease due to unresolved anger and resentment you hold towards someone or a situation.
  - Anxiety can stem from feeling like you have no control over a situation, which can lead to anger towards a perceived source of that lack of control.
  - When you suppress your anger due to social norms or personal beliefs, it can manifest as anxiety and can lead to a build-up of tension and potential outbursts when triggered.
- Depression
  - This occurs when you experience persistent sadness and low mood as a result of holding onto negative emotions like anger and bitterness towards others, often stemming from past events or perceived injustices.

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- Suppressed anger can lead to chronic stress, which is a significant risk factor for depression.
- When dwelling on past grievances, you might engage in negative self-talk, blaming yourself or feeling powerless, further deepening your depression.
- Anger and resentment can push you away from social connections, exacerbating feelings of loneliness and contribute to your depression.
- Stress
  - Increased stress levels can contribute to physical problems like:
    - Headaches
    - Digestive issues
    - High blood pressure
  - Holding onto resentment can also contribute to chronic stress as it keeps the body in a state of heightened alertness engaging your fight or flight response.

What are some of the signs of unresolved anger?

- Frequently dwelling on past events and grievances
- Difficulty letting go of grudges
- Feeling bitter or cynical
- Passive aggressive behavior
- Difficulty expressing emotions openly

Identifying the source of your unresolved situation

- Reflect on past experiences and pinpoint specific situations that are causing the anger and resentment
- Here are some tools to help you identify the situation:
  - Talk therapy
    - Discussing the issues with a therapist can help you identify a situation that you may have forgotten about, but still lingers in your subconscious.
  - Journaling
    - Writing down your feelings and thoughts related to the situation can provide insight and clarity.

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The act of forgiving is not just about the other person, but also about releasing yourself from the burdens of anger and resentment, leading to personal growth and inner peace.

Here are some steps to forgiveness that can help you let go of anger and move on with your life:

- Acknowledge
  - Admit that you've been hurt and recognize your emotions
  - Recognize that you are hurt and angry, and allow yourself to feel these emotions.
- Acceptance
  - Let go of negative thoughts and feelings of blame, bitterness and victimization.
  - Accepting a situation doesn't mean you agree with what happened or that the actions were right, it simply means you acknowledge the truth of the event.
  - Acceptance shifts your focus from dwelling on the past to manage your current emotions and move forward.
- Reflect and remember
  - This includes the events themselves and how you reacted, how you felt and how the anger and hurt have affected you since.
  - Analyze what happened, why it bothered you and what you can learn from the experience.
- Work through the guilt
  - Use guilt as a catalyst for positive change.
- Forgive yourself
  - Show yourself compassion and learn from the experience.
  - Understanding that not everything is under your control.
  - Taking ownership of your actions and the consequences, understanding the role you played in the situation.
- Forgive others
  - Choose to forgive the person who hurt you.
  - Trying to understand the other person's perspective, even if you don't agree with their actions, can facilitate the forgiveness process.

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Remember forgiveness is important as it allows you to release the burden of anger and resentment, allowing you to have improved physical and mental health along with stronger relationships and a greater sense of inner-peace.

In conclusion, I look forward to many more sermons in the future.

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