

Resting in God

“The freedom to present those we come in contact with to Father God for mercy, understanding that they are doing the best that they can do”

Study 17

John 18:36 (New International Version)

Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place."

Jesus lived so far above the kingdoms of this world that they had no hold on Him. He could love the unlovable. He delighted in forgiving those who hated Him. His passion was to see everyone be introduced to His Father, even those who had no belief in Him.

As Lord and Master of all things, He had every right to destroy any element in the world that did not acknowledge His Lordship. After all, He was God. Yes, He was living in the body of a man, but He was God, and worthy of praise. Having all the power to destroy anyone who denied Who He really was, He could have called down legions of angels, or raised up His followers to overcome anyone who was part of His horrendous murder. Instead, He chose to love them, have mercy on them, and even die so that they might live eternally with Him.

Throughout His life, Jesus was showing us how to live. We can understand that in our carnal minds but the ability to do so eludes us. Because of our hardened hearts the Holy Spirit needs to teach us how to live that way. Somewhere deep down in our inner being we do understand that His untouchable life is available to us and we want it. We are just incapable of getting there without His help.

What is often missed is that Jesus also taught us how to die, which brings a greater life. Bloodied and battered, rejected, mocked, and spit upon, the Son of God hung naked before the vile hearts of those He Himself had created. This jeering mass had unknowingly placed themselves against God Himself in their ignorance. They had set themselves up to be vaporized should Jesus choose to do so. In reality, He had every right to take their lives, He owned them.

Instead, He looked past their actions, and saw their incredible helplessness. He saw that they had submitted themselves to the influences of the lower kingdoms and were incapable of acting any other way. They were simply pawns, putty in the hands of their false gods, unable to escape. In doing so, He did the unthinkable. He forgave them!

That single act of forgiveness, in the midst of astounding peril to His very life, epitomized all of the presentations He had previously given of a proper way to live. At that moment He was showing those He loved that they could not only live in freedom, but they could die with the same kind of freedom from the perils of the world.

Forgiveness opened the door to peace. Forgiveness was the result of a true understanding of the hopelessness of those who hated. Forgiveness was the gift anyone who followed Him could give to those who spitefully used them and rise above any power that the lower kingdoms could present. In forgiving, they would move from the lower kingdoms in their heart, into the heavenly Kingdom with Him and His Father. With His kind of forgiveness in their hearts, they could actually pray for those who hated them, and desired to kill them. Living and dying with a heart of forgiveness, they became untouchable, and unbeatable. We are called to do the same.

Matthew 11:12 (New International Version) From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.

Have you ever observed someone steeped in the sin of unforgiveness? Do you see the bondage that they have placed themselves in? There is no joy in their lives. True happiness eludes them. Most of their days are spent in the pursuit of filling the empty hole that they have created because of their desire to hold an offense against someone. Because the choice of not forgiving is a choice not to love, their lives are void of any kind of real intimacy with others and with God.

A heart filled with forgiveness, on the other hand, is a violent weapon against all of the peril that the world can present. It destroys any hold that the lower kingdoms can have on a person and mightily advances the Kingdom of heaven. There is no weapon that can overcome a person who chooses to

forgive any act against them. Because they choose the weapon of love over the offense, they are free to deeply love in any and all situations. Darkness cannot exist where love and forgiveness are advancing the Kingdom of God.

Hebrews 4:9-10 (New International Version) There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; 10) for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his.

Have you ever thought about the foolishness of holding an offense against someone. Most of the time they are unaware of their offense, or in the darkest of times, when a reprobate mind is prevalent, they don't even care. The only one who is harmed is the person who can't or won't forgive. They literally hold murder in their heart. In doing so, there they can find no place for the love of God for them or through them.

Begin today to rest in God's love. Allow it to shine through you, even to the most vile of circumstances. Forgive those who hate you. They are no wiser than those who crucified Jesus. He looked past their sin and saw their need of the mercy of God in the same way that He did for you. Make sure that you forgive any offense against you before it gets a death grip on you. You will never experience the peace and rest in God until you choose to have peace in your heart for others.

For thought or discussion:

Which kingdom do you live in – The kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of this world, or The Kingdom Of Heaven

What is it going to take for you to change addresses if you live anywhere but with God in His Kingdom