



GOOD NEWS GUIDE

THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE

October, 2017

Bitterness — or Forgiveness?

Slavery was wrong, and is wrong. It's hateful. It's deplorable. It's despicable, an ungodly evil that should never have happened in the first place and certainly should never have been defended and perpetuated. All of that is true, and from our perspective today, it is totally self-evident to any thinking person.

But it's an unthinking, lazy step from that truth to the idea that every person who ever fought for the Confederacy was a totally evil person. Yes, they were wrong, and, being wrong, they did things that were wrong. They sinned against God and their fellow human beings. And those today who try to pretend that they were not wrong are just as wrong. I get that.

I think white supremacists are totally ignorant not only of history but also of God's truth. They seem willing, for whatever silly reasons, to maintain their ignorance at the expense not only of human beings they label as "non-whites," but also at the expense of decency and civilized behavior. I wish God would pick out a little island somewhere and send them all to it, and let them go ahead and be "supreme" all by themselves. Their actions demonstrate that they have no sense and are useless to society.

But I also deplore, and wish I could somehow help to reduce, the powerful current of angry, unforgiving bitterness that is evident today in those who insist on destroying and removing every symbol of the Confederate States of America. Yes, the rebellion of the South was a wrong-headed attempt, for mostly economic reasons, to maintain a social structure that was hateful and evil. But it happened. It's part of our history—yours, mine, and all Americans'. To try to obliterate it is to join forces with those other idiots who insist that Hitler's holocaust never happened.

A better reaction to the historical fact of the Confederacy would be to remember it, to illustrate its evils, to teach the whole truth about it in our school history classes, to venerate those who fought against it—and then move on to issues that are actually much more important today.

We can't help those who suffered in bondage two centuries ago. Spitting on the memorials of slave owners won't punish them in any useful way. And—this is important—the way to counter bigotry and hatred and violence is not with anger and more hatred and more violence. Getting rid of statues and burning rebel flags will never change anyone's heart for the better.

If he were living today, would Dr. King be demanding that every Confederate monument be torn down? I don't know, but I doubt it. His purpose was always to change hearts, rather than harden them. He spoke of hope, not bitterness. He talked of forgiveness and reconciliation, not vengeance. And his tactics ultimately had great effect because they were the tactics of God's love.

After Jesus taught His disciples the prayer that we know as "the Lord's Prayer," He said this to them: "For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. 6:14-15) We don't really need a better reason to forgive, do we?

When you have a real reason to be angry, it's very tempting to hang on to your anger and let it swell and blossom into fury. I know, I've been there. But the smarter thing to do is to ask yourself, and ask the Lord to show you, "What will make the situation better, rather than worse?"

That's enough from me on this subject. 😊
If you don't agree with me, I forgive you.

I hope you will read the "Guideposts" article on the next two pages, and then read it again. It's a powerful lesson on the subject of forgiveness. It demonstrates how important forgiveness is, and that it's not just a one-time decision, but a process.

Peace and all blessings in Jesus —

Brother Roland

This is a link to the 1972 Guideposts article by Corrie ten Boom:

[Corrie ten Boom on Forgiveness](#)

From time to time I get letters from inmates asking for Bible studies, Bibles, and other Christian materials. I don't have any, but I can refer you to a ministry that does have good Bible studies:

Mount Hope Prison Ministry, 25 Summit Ave, Hagerstown MD 21740

If you're an inmate and you need a Bible, your chaplain should be able to help you get one.

Archived issues of the "Good News Guide" are online at <http://www.goodnewsguide.org>.

Comments and questions may be sent to

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Forgiveness

How to be part of the solution, rather than just making the problem worse: **FORGIVE!**

Puzzle:

P E A C E O F M I N D X N R E N S D O C T N P S G V L Y W
F G W N Q G M L D X M Q U L M D S E W D N H E W X S T T U
E P Y B O Y C C Z C F V K M V R F X S J E I C J T I G K N
Y D H T E I O T I D V F E Z L I D T U S M G A V L P U E E
G F M Y I I T B C D B E L M L R K W T E N W Z A G T V X D
C H R I S T I A N G R O W T H P F M N B R A T Q N I O L E
F W B N R I K H R A H U N O T W O E N S E I F K G N T V T
H R D S K B C E T O Q K V D L P L N R V V J C R U X E R V
O A I S L S W A F U T S U B A A W T C R O J O B R R A B T
N K R E G H A L L S D S J U E G M A P L G F V Y Y T S E A
O T C N N H Z E F I T W E K H Y E L E H E I F O S D S E B
R J W R K D J D N A L H Z R L L D I D B H N N H R Y P S E
C Z O E I P S R C K M L Y A A V T M B R T E S J L J E W L
H W Q T M O D E E R F I N G C K Z B E K O E M R E V X T I
R V P T Q S A L K D D G L E I S F A V C R L Q Z L N N U K
I P H I W B O A Y E E P N Y S B U L S F N Q E E F E A G E
S I X B U V T T B R X A O Q Y S I A A R L A S H M H H G J
T G P S E R B I J K I O T T H I Z N D X E R T T T Q E Z E
S O E E H X L O H I W J Z H P I T C J O U H N N L Y D D S
S H L S L I L N X L Y N H W U N S E X O G E T K E N E Y U
A T D Y T H S S V F H H R R I L E K O M S E O O O P B B S
C P Y Y T I S H S P I R I T U A L C L E A N S I N G E V O
R P Q E Y N O I T A I L I C N O C E R O A T U A F T F R Z
I U N D L G E P E R S X C Q P N O R T A F I U I E Y G Q Z
F I R N U F M S S C S T U H A L I G Y K B H Z R T L O N X
I F R U S T R A T I O N O R H D C Q F F I G C F I B P R P
C Z Y A U A D Q N T M D R V K L N I A Q D H T I L T F N X
E C X I S G S S A K G S B W Z A M Z V U I I C X R X Y E V

Words:

*** Fruits of Unforgiveness**

BITTERNESS
RESENTMENT
ANGER
FRUSTRATION
ABUSE
BONDAGE
MENTAL IMBALANCE
PHYSICAL ILLNESS
DEBILITY
DEATH

*** Fruits of Forgiveness**

PEACE OF MIND
PHYSICAL HEALTH
SPIRITUAL CLEANSING
CHRISTIAN GROWTH
MATURITY
REPENTANCE
RECONCILIATION
RESTORATION
HEALED RELATIONSHIPS
A FRESH START
FREEDOM
VITALITY
LOVE
JOY
LIFE

*** Those We Must Forgive**

FAMILY
FRIENDS
ENEMIES
THE GOVERNMENT
RICH FOLKS
OURSELVES
OTHERS
EVERYONE

*** Reasons to Forgive**

OBEY THE LORD
HONOR CHRIST'S SACRIFICE
BE LIKE JESUS
PLEASE GOD
BE FORGIVEN