

“Claiming My ‘Peace’ of Heaven in 2011”

Today’s Lesson

Our Power To Heal

*PowerPoint notes are available at
www.unityofbakersfield.org*

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“Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.”

Ten of the most famous words ever spoken by someone who was about to die.

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Rosemary Fillmore Rhea, granddaughter of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, co-founders of Unity has written a booklet on Forgiveness. In it she states: *As we look at our complex and conflicted world, we might agree that the one most needed ingredient to bring forth universal peace and harmony is the attribute of forgiveness. When we study the history of civilizations,*

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...we see that there are old resentments, old hatreds, old injustices which continually stir the fires of revenge simmering somewhere in the human psyche. There are religious feuds, ethnic feuds, family feuds—feuds that continue from generation to generation. The memories of past injustices roll down through the ages, and few people seem willing to forgive or forget.

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To heal our world, we must learn the art of forgiveness. And the healing process must begin with us. How can we do it? How can we learn to forgive when the world teaches us that injustice must be answered, that those who have caused us pain and sorrow must be punished.

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“An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.” Gandhi
Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.” (Matt 18:21-22)

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“Resentment dampens the light of your own happiness.” Sharon Janis, Author

How many times have we used, or heard others use this statement when a wrong has been committed?

“I don’t get mad, I get even!”

I find this statement to be very ironic indeed. We may say we don’t get mad, but it takes malice and determination (MAD) to commit oneself to the act of vengeance.

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*We may say we don’t get mad, but it takes **malice and determination (MAD)** to commit oneself to the acts of resentment and vengeance.*

An exercise: Forget about the world stage for a moment. Close your eyes, see a white screen in front of you. Project onto the screen the last fight you had... when did it happen and what was it about, are you still carrying a grudge, if so why? Now ask yourself, “what will it take to end the feeling of resentment or the need for revenge? Open your eyes.

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Sooner or later everyone finds themselves in a position that requires them to practice forgiveness. Forgiveness to help heal many issues with our parents, siblings, friends, enemies, boss, spouse, partner, children and of course the most important person of all...

Ourselves and the issue of being right.

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I would like to share an email I received the other day from a beautiful and spiritually aware individual I have been helping through some very tough times. I asked if it was okay to share it with you and she was overjoyed that her experience could possibly be of help to others. This is a testimony of one very powerful - life defining moment for her:

Hi There!

You know what? Somehow, we survive! And we’re going to continue to survive all the bumps. It was a very rough weekend, for sure, but Monday morning, a very dark, difficult time was waning. I absolutely hate Monday morning television, but happened to catch a show that changed everything for me.

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I happened to stumble across such a simple concept that I couldn’t seem to look away. It dealt with such a powerful message that hit very close. It dealt with forgiveness. The program showed how powerful just the simple act of forgiveness, and owning up to the role of responsibility of seeing how important it was. To realize that “being right” was holding people back from any progress. It seemed so trite, but I suddenly realized my role in contributing to the relationship and its current state. Later, [he] Jeff was working on a puzzle, and I just blurted out something – I asked him for forgiveness. To which he gave me a look like I was nuts!

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But I suddenly realized that being right wasn’t important at all and that I needed to acknowledge his pain. And when I realized that, his face became relaxed and he became focused and really turned in to “us”. He later came in from the greenhouse and asked if I wanted to go for a ride and have lunch, and he actually wanted conversation! It was amazing. Chuck, it was such a simplistic concept, but helped me so much. Like a light bulb flashed and I was able to clearly understand his pain and my own.

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No “being right”; no “but you did this”; no trying to have the right answers. It just wasn’t important anymore. You know, I never even heard anything else on that show. It was such a powerful, life-defining moment! Suddenly I was able to see everything in perfect perspective. I didn’t even want any answers, I didn’t want to even “work on things,” I just wanted to stay in the moment and savor the experience. And looking back, I see that he just needed some understanding and to be heard. So—everything is so much better. I don’t care if we ever work out anything else. I just want to enjoy each day, just to enjoy each other.

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I believe everything will work out and if not, at least he and I were able to connect for a while. While being sick was never a part of our future plans, we’re both dealing with it much better and it just feels wonderful to have each other again... I feel in my heart that he and I will be fine. Thanks so much for your help! The past year and a half were the most difficult I’ve ever had in my life. And – I would just love to see the both of you later this summer! Yeah, we’ll be fine. Take care, Dyan

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“We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love.” -Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King

“I do not even need to forgive people, for I harbor no animosity. If they do evil things, I feel compassion for them because I know they have hurt themselves.” - Peace Pilgrim

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When we come to realize that there is no blame, no guilt, no shame, no right, no wrong, but only love from God and the life force that sustains all things, we will come to understand and practice the forgiveness that Jesus and all the master teachers taught, and in so doing find our power to heal all manner of pain and suffering.