

Sorry

Seems
to be the
Hardest
Word

- Deborah Ross

Although “I’m sorry” are two of the most powerful words we could speak to another; for many, uttering this simple phrase is extremely difficult. Ever wonder why this is? Perhaps pride, self preservation, or even neglect, play a role in our avoidance of these spiritually liberating words.

Sincere forgiveness and humility have the power to alter the course of our lives – all to the glory of God – in a profound way. However, all too often we become immobilized by the lie of the enemy, erroneously believing that, in forgiving, we are somehow granting permission for the offense. Refusing to forgive can be likened to wearing an invisible muzzle over our mouths that restricts us from saying what we know is needed to heal and restore relationships and, more importantly, strengthen our relationship with our heavenly Father.

Ever since the Garden of Eden, Satan has been hard at work creating division among mankind. He knows that strife and being unwilling to forgive open the door to a long list of hardships that we allow in when we refuse to humble ourselves. We can refute these barriers by simply saying, “I’m sorry.” Instead, our stubbornness hinders us from receiving the good that God has in store for us. The master deceiver knows that if he can just get us to offend someone, or become offended by the actions or words of another, he can slither his way into the depths of our souls and cause us to sin against God.

To be unforgiving is a sin! It can lead us down the dark road of bitterness, resentment, anger, rage and, ultimately, retaliation if not purged through humility and forgiveness. This path of self destruction brings with it guilt and separation from the goodness of the Lord, while causing problems in our lives.

The Word of God is very clear about the importance apologizing. Mark 11:25-26 says that we should not begin to pray to the Lord until we have forgiven those who have offended us. This passage goes on to say that we must forgive others if we expect God to forgive us! Then again, in Matthew 5:23-24, Jesus says that we should go and make things right with our brother (or sister) before we take our offering to the Lord. Clearly, God has no respect for offerings that we give out of a desire to make ourselves feel better. Trying to hide, or cover up, our unforgiving, true spirit from the Lord is futile. Our offerings to Him should go forth with no shame. We should give to Him out of a clean heart.

Albeit difficult, deep in our conscious we each know it is our job to be the first to say *I'm sorry* when we have offended someone. But, what do we do when the tables are turned, and someone has offended us? Our actions should ultimately be the same, whether the offense is created by someone else or by us. As a Child of the King, we should have a deep desire to keep our hearts clean by *letting go* of those things that were sent by the devil to destroy us. Granted, the person who offended us may not even know that they did so; still, we need to be quick to bring things out into the open in a loving way and then simply say, "I'm sorry."

It doesn't always seem fair. Certainly, it doesn't seem natural. But, one thing is for sure, everything in God's Kingdom is hinged on LOVE. Our job is to walk in love. His job is to bring freedom, restoration, and favor to our lives as we obey His word by doing His will. The scriptures say that "obedience is better than sacrifice." Learning to be obedient by simply learning the art of a humble apology is of great price in the Lord's eyes.

Now, there are those who will say, "I'm sorry, but ..." Friend, that is not a godly apology. What you are really saying is, "I'm trying to obey God by apologizing to you, but I really don't forgive you and I really don't feel that I should have to apologize to you." You are probably thinking to yourself, "So what is wrong with that? I can't help the way I feel, right?"

Perhaps, that is the way you feel at the present time. But, as you "choose" to freely forgive without any attachments, you are cutting the chains that bind you to a life of bitterness. You are leaving the response up to the other person and therefore releasing yourself of all of the responsibility of that sin. What they choose to do with your apology is between them and God. You are placing the ball in their court and raising your hands in worship to the King of Glory! Your feelings will align with your actions once you do what is commanded in God's word.

It sounds crazy, I know, but God's principles are pretty radical. Supernatural things happen when we follow His directions for our lives. He makes crooked things straight. He makes closed doors open. He makes depression turn to joy. He gives LIFE! All we have to do is trust Him.

One other scenario I'd like to address concerning an apology is this; saying, I'm sorry, does not mean that you should now be in that person's company. You can forgive someone and make peace with them, yet, let them go. This is not God's ultimate desire, but sometimes it is necessary in order for you to live your life free from future offenses, and free from further conflicts. In every apology, try to bring restoration; but, if that is not possible, walk in freedom knowing that you have released all negative thoughts and emotions concerning your relationship with that person. Decide to love them in spite your differences. Pray for their well being.

"I'm sorry" are two words that seem harder to birth than a 20 pound baby. Yet, these powerful two words can, and will, change the course of your life, bring favor, and set you free to LIVE a life abundant in Christ Jesus! Now, go forgive, and be blessed!



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