

ESSENTIALS FOR A NEW YEAR

Whoever we allow to establish what is essential for our lives reflects the love of our lives.

Definition of Essential:

Absolutely Necessary; extremely important

...love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'... Mark 12:30-31 (NLT)

What Jesus says is essential:

- Love God completely and love others intentionally.
- How we love is essential.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NIV)

This Love is different:

- This love does what doesn't come naturally.
- This love responds to the image of God in others.
- This love is not restricted by our emotions.
- God's love for us has to shape the emotions within us.

Love...keeps no record of wrongs... 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NIV)

- Being hurt is an event, but how we respond to the hurt is a choice.

Learning to forgive has nothing to do with how you feel.

Learning to forgive is a spiritual discipline.

25 ... when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too. Mark 11:25 (NLT)

When it comes to being hurt:

We have to take our emotions out of it, if we're going to get past it.

31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. 32 Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. Ephesians 4:31-32 (NLT)

For God did not give us a Spirit of fear but of power and love and self-control. 2 Timothy 1:7 (NET)

Forgiveness is not:

- Forgiveness is not forgetting what's been done.
- Forgiveness is not fair.

¹⁰He [God] does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. ¹¹For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; ¹²as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. Ps 103:10-12

Forgiving simply means:

- Refusing to seek revenge.

- Refusing to be consumed by the event.

- Giving others what God has given me.

Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Colossians 3:13 (NLT)

The Good News is:

- Healing is available for the hurting.

3 He (God) heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds. Psalms 147:3 (NLT)

- When we choose to hold onto the hurt, it prevents us from healing.

...watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them."

⁴ Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them.' ⁵ The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" Luke 17: 3-5 (NIV)

As Christians:

- We are to forgive as we have been forgiven.

¹³ Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Colossians 3:13 (NLT)

- We can't live in God's forgiveness if we don't live with extended forgiveness.

...and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.... ¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. Matthew 6:12,14-15 (NIV)

- The heart of the Gospel, and the lives it touches, is forgiveness.

Faith to forgive means:

- Faith enables me to choose healing when my flesh wants to choose to be offended!

How to forgive:

- Recognize that everyone's imperfect.

"There is not a single person in all the earth who is always good and never sins." Ecclesiastes 7:20 (NLT)

- Relinquish your right to revenge.

...never avenge yourselves. Leave that to God, for he has said that he will repay those who deserve it." Romans 12:19 (TLB)

- Respond to hurt with with blessing.

...Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." Luke 6:27-28 (NIV)

When the worst is done to you, allow it to bring out God in you.



TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

Questions for Connection Groups:

These questions also work well for personal time with God.

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain why?
- **You're going to have to come up with your own questions, I created too many points! (Sorry)**
- Why is forgiveness one of the most difficult expressions love for us to give? Do you believe it is one of the most important expressions of love? Why?
- How does God's forgiveness allow us to forgive others? How does holding onto hurt prevent healing?
- Have you been forgiven by someone? How did they do it? How does God forgive us? Do it that way!

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