

Life's too short to hold grudges.

No it's not!
You just need to organize your time better.



search ID: kmh467

© Original Artist
Reproduction rights obtainable from
www.CartoonStock.com

Matthew 6:7-15
Nursing a Grudge
WRCoB 1.29.23

Life **IS** too short to hold a grudge
But you wouldn't know it.

There was this married couple
Who had a quarrel.

As arguments go, it wasn't a big deal.

They reacted as they usually do
By giving each other the "silent treatment."

This went on for a good solid week
When the husband realized he needed his wife.

You see, in order to catch a flight to Chicago
For a business meeting
He had to be up by 5:00 AM.

Notorious for sleeping through the alarm
He needed his wife to wake him up.

But not wanting to be the first to break the silence
He instead, wrote on a piece of paper
"Wake me up at 5:00 AM."

He left it taped to the bathroom mirror in plain view
And went soundly to sleep.

The next morning the man woke.
His wife was gone
The clock struck 9:00 am

And his flight reached the destination w/out him

He got up extremely upset
Determined to find his wife
And give her a piece of his mind.

When he saw on his wife's pillow
A note with these words
"It's 5:00. Wake up!"

~~

The question for us today is this.

Why is it we waste so much energy nursing grudges?

Let's face it, we've all nursed a grudge or two
Or three in our lives.

Nursing a grudge is an interesting phrase.
We know what it means of course.

It's an oxymoron.

To nurse something usually means to bring it back to health.

To nurse a grudge, however, means the opposite.

Nursing a grudge means to keep the hurt from healing

So, let's talk about nursing a grudge.

You know there are proper ways to nurse a grudge.

First, we need to mull over the offense.

Relive the moment, play it over and over, and over again.

Next, we need to consider ways
We wish we could had responded
But didn't because we didn't think quick enough.

I mean, don't you just hate that.

I think of so many great comebacks in the shower

And finally, we need to spend sleepless nights
In morbid fascination
On how we're going to get even.

~~

*"They say it's good to let your grudges go, but I don't know,
I'm quite fond of my grudge. I tend it like a little pet."*

— Liane Moriarty, Big Little Lies

~~

Physically speaking, over time
Nursing a grudge becomes a health problem.

Resentment creates symptoms of stress
Hypertension and high blood pressure.

~~

There was one study I was reading about
That actually measured the weight of resentment.

No, seriously.

According to researchers at Erasmus University

Those who CARRIED a grudge
Were not able to jump five consecutive jumps
As high as others who were resentment free.

I know it's a strange study for sure.

But it does suggest that there's some truth in the statement
That one does carry emotional/spiritual burdens
And resentment is one of them.

Spiritually speaking, nursing a grudge
Drives a wedge in our relationships with God and others.

And according to our lesson today
 There is a correlation
 In being a RECEIVER of God's forgiveness
 And in being a BEARER of forgiveness.

This is what Jesus is teaching in our Scripture today.

~~

This morning, we come back to the teachings of Jesus
 In his Sermon on the Mount.

As I said last week
 If you want to know the heart of Jesus
 Read Matthew 5-7.

There in the heart of Jesus we find above all things
 Grace, immeasurable grace.

But when we get to verse 14
 We come away with a feeling
 That God's grace is conditional.

Matthew 6:14 CEB

14 "If you forgive others their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."

I cannot believe this is a tit-for-tat arrangement.

I don't believe Jesus is saying
 That God withholds God's forgiveness
 Until we find it in your hearts
 To forgive someone else.

God's love and forgiveness is there . . . unconditionally
 Its fullest expression found in the crucifixion

What I believe Jesus is saying is
 It's difficult if not impossible

To experience God's grace
When we harbor ill-will towards others.

Donald Hagner from the Word Biblical Commentary
On the Gospel of Matthew writes

These verses are a forceful way of making a significant point that it is unthinkable—impossible—that we can enjoy God's forgiveness without in turn extending our forgiveness towards others.

In response to God's gift of grace
We, in turn, become grateful AND gracious.

Matthew 6:15 CEB

¹⁵ “But if you don't forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your sins.”

If we won't let go of our resentment towards others
We fail to enjoy God's gracious acts of redemption.

God doesn't withhold forgiving grace.

It's that we are unable to fully experience it
When we devote so much spiritual energy
Obsessing over emotional and spiritual wounds

Richard B. Gardner writes,
In the Believers' Church Bible Commentary:

God's forgiveness precedes and underlies our forgiveness of one another. The point here is that there has to be reciprocity between the way we respond to the misdeeds of others and the way God responds to our own.

If we refuse to practice forgiveness in our relationship with others then we void God's forgiveness in our own lives as well.

~~

Jesus teaches in the Lord's Prayer,
That we are to forgive as we have been forgiven.

In fact, Jesus teaches that even BEFORE we pray
We should forgive.

Mark 11:25 CEB

²⁵ And whenever you stand up to pray, if you have something against anyone, forgive so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your wrongdoings.”^[a]

The Apostle Paul, too,
Writes instructions concerning the need to forgive.

Colossians 3:13 CEB

¹³ Be tolerant with each other and, if someone has a complaint against anyone, forgive each other. As the Lord forgave you, so also forgive each other.

These aren't isolated Scripture verses.

James, the brother to Jesus writes

James 2:13 CEB

¹³ There will be no mercy in judgment for anyone who hasn't shown mercy. Mercy overrules judgment.

~~

An unforgiving heart is locked in its own self-made prison
Unable to forgive
Unable to receive forgiveness.

The early Christian theologian St Augustine said,

Resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.

It ends up only really hurting you.

When you hold a grudge, you want someone else's sorrow to reflect your level of hurt but the two rarely meet.

— Steve Maraboli,

~~

There was once a man who felt pushed
To be baptized at the age of 12
By his pastor.

In that era, it was an expectation to be baptized
Along with your classmates.

For whatever reason he wasn't ready.

Ad this pastor had no business pushing him to do it.

On the day of baptism, the pastor asked the candidates
To come forward and this man didn't.

He stayed in the pew.

The pastor waited
But the man didn't move.

Finally, the pastor said so everyone could hear.

"Don't you want to come up here
With the rest of your classmates?"

Ever so reluctantly, he came forward and was baptized.

He was in his late eighties when another pastor
Served his congregation.

He and his wife were very active in the church.

They went to all the church functions.

A few years after the arrival of the pastor
The man's wife passed away.

After the funeral, the pastor noted
The man immediately stopped attending church.

No matter how many times pastor would call or stopped by
The man stated that nothing was wrong.

After months of trying, the man finally sat down
And told the pastor his story..

He nursed a grudge against the church
He attended with his wife for 76 years.

And never let on, he had any issue with the church.

And not wanting to offend her
He waited until she passed away
Before he left the church and never came back

I wonder what kind of effect it had on him?

It can't have been good.

~~

Nursing a grudge is a form of spiritual bondage.

Your anger, resentment, and grudges hold you captive.

So, do yourself a favor and learn to forgive.

Get help if necessary.

Because no matter how hard you nurse that grudge
It ain't never going to heal.

And as long as you withhold forgiveness
You will never fully experience
The healing balm of God's grace.

Remember, the first to apologize is the bravest
The first to forgive is the strongest
The first to forget is the happiest.

~~

Finish with YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/svyZAJqWBw8>