

Life's too short to hold grudges.

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



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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!"

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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.

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*"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

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

Resentment creates symptoms of stress  
Hypertension and high blood pressure.

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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.

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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**

**<sup>15</sup> “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.*

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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**

**<sup>25</sup> 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.”<sup>[a]</sup>**

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

### **Colossians 3:13 CEB**

**<sup>13</sup> 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**

**<sup>13</sup> There will be no mercy in judgment for anyone who hasn't shown mercy. Mercy overrules judgment.**

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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.

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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.

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Finish with YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/svyZAJqWBw8>