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### “I'll take it to the grave”

Have you ever met someone who holds a grudge? Someone who down right won't forgive someone for something they feel like was so deeply wrong that they promise they will take it to the grave with them? I can't believe how many people guard pain and suffering in their heart and never realize that the only person that pent up anger is hurt... is them! Did you know that those who refuse to give forgiveness to there brothers and sisters will take it much farther than the grave? They will take it to the moment when they bow before the Lord God Jehovah and judgment day and the words of Christ will boom forth like a trumpet: **But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matthew Chapter 6 verse 15 KJV)** - “taking it to the grave” is simply not a good plan, especially when you come to know Jesus Christ... if today you are still holding back the forgiveness you so desperately need to give: forgive them! Let it go! Nothing is worth standing before your God and creator knowing that you refused to forgive the pain and suffering!

Have you ever seen the blank face and the dead eyes of someone who is so lost and angry that they can't see straight? Like a physical weight on their shoulders it weighs them down, it seems like nothing can make them happy... its everyone and everything in the world that has gone wrong and its never their fault... you know the type, I wonder today are you feeling a bit that way? As we enter in to day 21 of the 30 day challenge I pray you would understand: forgiveness is not always easy, but its necessary. Healing doesn't always happen over night but we must give the Lord the chance to do a full work in our hearts. When we give the Lord the only chance He will need we will begin to feel the wonderful power and grace of the Holy Spirit and we will begin to feel and see actual changes in our lives. How can I say that? How can I guarantee that if you are walking with the Lord and allowing God to come first in your home you will see and feel changes? **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. (Galatians Chapter 5 verse 22-24 KJV)** – when the Holy Spirit is moving in a home you will begin to see joy, peace, longsuffering, and all the wonderful fruits of the Holy Spirit! Have you been seeing those pop-up around your home lately? If not, repent and turn to the Lord fully again in prayer! Put your home in His hands, and continue to desperately search for Him! You will find Him... when you seek Him with all your heart! Amen.

## Daily Devotional

by: Pastor Richard Webster ([abcpastor@bellsouth.net](mailto:abcpastor@bellsouth.net))

### Forgiveness

***But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matthew 6:15)***

Throughout the Bible we are taught about God's amazing forgiveness. There isn't a greater example of forgiveness than God's. Let's examine it for a moment. We all make mistakes and mess up. When we make mistakes, it is called sin. When we sin, it is a direct violation against the very nature of God. Because sin separates us from God's nature, sin has consequences. God loved us so much that He sent His Son to pay the price for the consequences of our sins, and He forgives us of the violation against Him. We do absolutely nothing to deserve or earn His forgiveness. It is a gift from God.

In order for a marriage to be successful, we must forgive each other. No one is perfect not even our spouses. The problem we have is that we think that our spouses has to earn our forgiveness before we can give it. If they can do something to earn forgiveness, is it really forgiveness? No! It is a contractual agreement that is external and based on merits. True forgiveness is an internal decision that cannot be earned. It must come from the heart, and it must be given even if they don't deserve it. The bible teaches that if we want God's forgiveness then we must be willing to forgive. What do you need to forgive today?

## Food for thought

by: Daniel Higginbotham ([dhigginbotham@myemanuel.com](mailto:dhigginbotham@myemanuel.com))

Do you trust yourself? Do you know your own abilities? Do you think to yourself “I can do that” or “I can't do that”, do you know that you won't fail yourself even when the rest of the world will? Isn't it funny how we can tend to put ourselves on a pedestal and say “we are the standard” knowing full well we are accident prone, failure riddled, and it is only by God's grace that we are successful in anything! As you enter in to day 21 of the 30 day challenge I want to ask you: are your expectations for your spouse more than they should be? Are your “standards” so high that no one could ever hope to meet them? Its humbling to know we serve a God who is so holy, so perfect, so wonderful that it is impossible for us to be in His presence EXCEPT by wearing the grace of Jesus Christ! Have you been loving like Christ? I know I have fallen much short in giving mercy and love to my wife and I have and will continue to repent but the question again remains: are your standards and expectations far beyond what they should be?

Forgiveness is critical and we spent two days understanding we must forgive our spouse and everyone that we love. Knowing that I believe many times in our marriages that many conflicts and arguments would be avoided if we fulfilled the most basic of commands: **Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. (Matthew Chapter 7 verse 12 KJV)** - the “golden rule”, do to others the things you would want them to do to you... I fall severely short in remembering this most basic commandment but it is critical that we study it, treasure it, put it in our hearts and trust in the Lord to show us how. It is interesting to look at even my own life and know that time and time again I have been so angry and blinded by the flesh that I have totally forgotten to obey the God I serve. Many will teach you, incorrectly, that once you are born again “you can live anyway you want” and I tremble thinking about the judgment for those false teachers. Do you know that scripture plainly says, from the mouth of our Lord Jesus Christ: **He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. (John Chapter 14 verse 21 KJV)** - do you love Jesus? Remember as we have discovered: actions speak louder than words...

Its hard, I know its hard, Jesus Christ knows its hard, our Father in heaven knew it would be hard before He created all things. Hard does not mean impossible. We are not perfect men and women and we will fall and fail but we must humbly seek forgiveness and guidance from the Lord. Guidance... giving God the keys to the car and saying “lets go” never thinking to ask “where are we going”, trusting in the Lord when His word says: **For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. (Jeremiah Chapter 21 verse 11 KJV)** – have you found yourself way off course somewhere over in the ditch? That is because you took the keys back from God and started driving your own way... its interesting to see that every time we try to go by ourselves we get lost and make that turn to the desert, it is only when we begin to thirst and hurt that we realize: “uh oh, I think we made a wrong turn”, today as you enter in to day 21 of the 30 day challenge I wonder: have you made a wrong turn? Are you trying your way and failing? That should not come as a big surprise to us: **Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John**

**Chapter 14 verse 6 KJV).**

To truly begin to give forgiveness and build trust we must change from the inside out. We must humbly ask our spouse to forgive us, because even if we don't think we are in the wrong, chances are we have equally done wrong. Let us love our spouse and our children not only as Christ loved the church but more so: how we want to be loved. Give them your best, fight the good fight everyday, do not give up hope, know that we will have a breakthrough and treasure it in your heart: even if it takes a lifetime, I will not stop trying to be the person my spouse deserves, the person my Lord Jesus Christ would want me to be. Do all that you do for His glory, to honor His commandments, to demonstrate the fruits of the Spirit in your life, and to show the great love that we are called to show! Love them like Jesus! Amen.

## **Meet the family**

**We will soon be hearing from the second family in the “meet the family” section and I pray that you would ponder in your heart God's vision for your own family. Think to yourself today, what has God done in my life? What has He done in the lives of my family? Praise Him and thank Him for every blessing and every second that He has always been by your side! Amen.**

## Prayer Suggestions

Today before you pray I would like you to understand the beautiful promise the Lord gives us about our prayer: **Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. (Matthew Chapter 7 verse 7-8 KJV)** – today God is giving you the opportunity to demonstrate His power and grace... while you take it? Bow your head, humble yourself before Him, open your heart and your mouth in prayer!

### Today pray for:

- **God to give you mercy and show you how to better know and serve Him**
- **God to give you grace to fulfill the amazing command to treat others as we want to be treated**
- **God to continue a healing in your marriage and in your family**
- **God to teach you how to be the best you can possibly be giving you strength to honor Him in all you do**
- **God to show you how to better know Him and to drive the darkness away from your life and family**

## About

The My Emanuel 30 day challenge came about through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and we pray that God would be glorified and praised as a direct result of this program. It is the deepest desire of all those involved with this program that the healing grace of Jesus Christ would be abundantly felt throughout the families with a member participating in the challenge. The program is a direct result of the power of the Lord and a demonstration of His wisdom and foresight in bringing both the paths of Pastor Richard Webster, myself, and all those who have helped with the program together in a way to use us and our individual talents to profess the wonderful Good News of His salvation and wonderful grace, mercy, and abundant love.

Throughout our lives we have seen and directly felt the chaos and tragedy caused in the destruction of divorce. In interacting with brothers and sisters from all walks of life we have seen again and again the damage caused by the wedge the enemy drives in between a man and wife. It has been our greatest displeasure to see the tragedy, pain, suffering, and grief caused by the life altering decision in which so many couples make out of anger only to realize later that not only was it not what they wanted but so far from what they needed they couldn't even remember what they were separating for. It is our desire for all couples to understand the truth, God desires marriage to be a life long commitment and made us for this exact purpose: **Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. (Genesis Chapter 2 verse 24 KJV)** – to become one flesh as we will examine later on through the program is a physical alteration that to reverse would be a mutilation and a physical destruction of ones own flesh and is the furthest thing from God's desire for any family. It is our dearest hope that God will reveal His glory and that Jesus Christ will pour out His grace upon all those who participate in this program regardless of the purpose. The truth is that Jesus Christ is not “a hope” He is the ONLY HOPE and the only way for families to make it through the stress and destruction of today's society is through keeping Him always at the center.

Pastor Richard Webster is the Pastor of Adairsville Baptist Church in Adairsville, Georgia. Brother Richard has been a powerful influence in my own walk with the Lord and I pray that as God has used this brother for His glory and has shared much wisdom to me through him that you would pay special attention to the message God has blessed this brother to share. Pastor Webster is both a husband, a father, a brother, a son, a friend, and a pastor who is determined to serve the Lord and bring glory and honor to our Savior. I pray that you would understand that this brother has seen first hand the destruction of divorce, the pain and suffering that comes at the hands of the evil of the enemy as satan tries to relentlessly destroy families. Know that the daily devotionals are the ultimate inspiration of Jesus Christ and may the Lord be seen through every word.

It feels strange even now trying to write about myself, my name is Daniel Higginbotham and simply put I am a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is my desire and hope that the Lord God Jehovah would make His presence known and that you would feel the Holy Spirit interacting and interceding in your life. I thank God for this opportunity and I will pray for you and your family over this next 30 days that God would reveal the beautiful truth to you as He has me: **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (John Chapter 8 verse 36 KJV).**