

CROSS WORDS SERIES

"I Hate You Because You Hurt Me!"

2 Cor 5:18 -20

- **Since God took the first step, so must I.**

- **Since God paid the cost, I must pay the cost.**

- **Since God is willing, I must be willing.**

- **Since God waits for a response, I must wait for a response.**

Read Colossians 3:12-14. , Phil 4:8. God has already chosen us. As His chosen people, we are required to treat one another with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. There are things that we do to one another that hurt deeply, like jealousy, gossip, lies, harsh words, disrespect, stealing, cheating and causing physical harm. The unspoken words and the things that we do not do and do not say can hurt even more; like words of gratitude and thanks, acts of love and thoughtfulness, and expressions of friendship and forgiveness. These things we must pray for daily and God will provide. What effect do God's unlimited compassion, kindness, patience, and gentleness toward you have on how you treat others? Discuss specific instances where God has changed how you treat others? Why do you believe it is important to treat others the way God treats us? What positive results have you seen with your family, in the workplace, at church etc. because of your commitment to treat others the way God requires?

Read Matthew 5:10-12. Because we are God's children, we will be persecuted for His sake. Does it bother you when others attack you because of what you believe? Do you spend a lot of time trying to figure out why? Do you know that God considers you to be blessed when you are attacked for his sake? Describe a time when you felt you were being attacked by people whom you thought were your friends because you were taking a stand for Christ. How did you respond? What did God teach you from this situation? What did you learn about yourself?

Read Matthew 5:43-48. God tells us to pray for our enemies. Why is it so hard to pray for the people who do us wrong? Why do you think God tells us to pray for our enemies? How does praying for our enemies change how we feel about them? How does knowing that Jesus intercedes on our behalf daily when we mess up change how we view praying for our enemies? Is there someone in your life that comes to mind that you need to pray for?

Read Hebrews 10:30-31. God will judge. Have you ever felt that it was your duty to make sure that someone pays for what he or she did to you? If you have actually hurt someone because they hurt you, how did that make you feel? Do you believe that the battle is not yours but it is the Lord's? Do you find it hard to allow God to handle the situation? What good can come out of us forgiving someone who has committed a wrong against us? What affect can forgiveness have on those who are watching the situation unfold?

Read Matthew 18:21-35. God requires that we forgive because He forgave us. How does it make you feel to know God holds Christians to a higher standard? Share a time when God extended His grace toward you in a particular situation, but when you were confronted with a similar situation with someone else, you did not exercise such grace. Did the Holy Spirit remind you of the grace you had received? How did you respond? How do you think God felt about the way you handled the situation? Is there someone you need to forgive or apologize to? **Taking It Home:** How Will I Apply It: Identify at least one person that you have been struggling to forgive, and begin praying for God to heal your heart? If you know that God is calling you to reconcile, do not delay, take the first step today. You may need someone to hold you accountable to ensure that you take the necessary steps. Share this with a trusted friend and watch God move in your relationships.