

Even when a person has offended you, it causes you to have bad feelings towards the offender. Go to them, never accuse them but ask them to forgive you. Wait for those needed words, "Yes, I forgive you."

When you do this then God is pleased and fellowship is restored.

5. Christ is our Example - Ephesians 4:27-32 "Neither give place to the devil....29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all **malice**: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Notice verse 32. We are to forgive others like Christ has forgiven us.

How is that? Jesus forgives you immediately and completely. That is the way we are to forgive others. We are to follow the example of Jesus.

6. How often are we to forgive?

Matthew 18:21-22 "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? 22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." (490 times a day) We are to forgive others like Jesus forgives us..

7. How should we forgive others? Matthew 18:15-17

1. Right away. Don't put it off. It will eat you up.
2. Privately or publicly

CLOSING



Six nails that will nail shut the windows of Heaven:

1. Money - the misuse of it.
2. Domestic problems.
3. Disobedience to the Word of God.
4. Unconfessed sin in our lives, commission or omission
5. Unbelief
6. An unforgiving spirit.

Let's remove those nails so the windows of Heaven will open. Then we can receive answers to our prayers and have the blessings of God fall upon us.

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NAILING THE WINDOWS OF HEAVEN SHUT

TEXT: 1 John 3:22, Luke 11:1, 1 Timothy 2:1-4, 1 Samuel 12:23

INTRODUCTION: A person said to me, "When I pray, it seems the heavens become as brass and the windows of heaven are nailed shut."

"There is nothing but deadness and I get nothing from God after I have prayed."

REMEMBER THESE BIBLE FACTS:

1. **God commands us to pray.** Isa. 55:6, 1 Samuel 12:23
2. **God hears our prayers.** Psalm 65:2
3. **God answers prayer.** Isaiah 58:9
4. **God delights in our prayers.** Proverbs 15:8

These four facts indicate that the windows of heaven are open. However, there is another aspect of prayer.

YOU CAN NAIL THE WINDOWS OF HEAVEN SHUT.

Let me give you some nails that will nail the windows of heaven shut.

NAIL #1 MONEY - How do you use your money?

Malachi 3:8-11 "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. 9 Ye are **cursed** with a **curse**: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. 10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, (the promise, the blessing) if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a **blessing**, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. 11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts." (Luke 6:38, Prov 3:9-10, 1 Cor. 16:1-2, Mat. 6:33)

It is your choice, a blessing or a curse.

NAIL #2 DOMESTIC MATTERS

1 Peter 3:7 "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." (Eph. 5:21-6:4)

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NAIL #3 DISOBEDIENCE TO THE WORD OF GOD.

Proverbs 28:9 “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.”

1 John 3:22 “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.”

2 Timothy 2:19 “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

1 Thessalonians 5:22 “Abstain from all appearance of evil”.

2 Timothy 2:22 “Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart”

NAIL #4 UNCONFESSED SIN

TWO KINDS COMMISSION - doing what I should not do.

OF SIN: OMISSION - not doing what I should do.

Psalms 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

Isaiah 1:15 “And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.”

Isaiah 59:1-3 “Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: 2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. 3 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.”

Proverbs 28:13 “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

NAIL #5 UNBELIEF

Hebrews 11:6 “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

Psalms 37:4-5 “Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give

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thee the desires of thine heart. 5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.”

1 John 5:14-15 “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: 15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.” **2 Corinthians 5:7** “For we walk by faith, not by sight:”

NAIL #6 AN UNFORGIVING SPIRIT.

1. The problem, we get offended by someone and malice sets in. Malice means having ill or bad feeling towards someone. **Colossians 3:8** “But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, **malice**, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.”

When we have malice in our heart:

- * we can't hear the Pastor's message because our focus is on the hurt.
- * we spread our malice to our family and to others.
- * we become a prisoner and focus on our hurt. We are in bondage
- * it will effect your health.

2. The solution, we are to forgive those who have offended us.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:14 “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:”

3. A warning if we do not forgive: Matthew 6:15 “But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

It is very important that we forgive others because we need forgiveness from God daily for our own sins. If we do not forgive others then God will not forgive us. (That is dangerous because we need to be forgiven daily)

~~FORGIVENESS~~

4. The “HOW TO”

Matthew 5:23-24 “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, (when you pray) and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, (stop praying) and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”

(go back home and continue praying)

What does this verse tell us to do?

You are to go to that person who has offended you (or you have offended them) and say, “I have offended you and it has brought bad feelings between us. Will you please forgive me for offending you?”

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