

# FAITH UNDER FIRE #1

FWC Tuesday 11-16-10

~Matthew 18:23-35; One Servant Owed One-Third Of A Year's Wage; The Other Owed More Than He Could Earn In A Lifetime.

~Matthew 6:14-15, "For If Ye Forgive Men Their Trespasses, Your Heavenly Father Will Also Forgive You: But If Ye Forgive Not Men Their Trespasses, Neither Will Your Father Forgive Your Trespasses."

~Genesis 37:19-20; Joseph Did Nothing Wrong, But Was Persecuted And Hated By His Own Brothers To The Point That They Sold Him Into

~Slavery! John 16:33; Matthew 5:45; 1 Peter 5:8; Psalm 55:12-14; Luke 17:1;

~OFFENSE... Offense Is Like The Bait In A Trap – It Is Harmless Unless We Feed On It. But It Is Deadly When It Is Consumed!

~One Of The Signs Of The End Time Is That Many Will Be Offended! Matthew 24:10-13; Matthew 7:15;

~We Construct Walls When We Are Hurt To Safeguard Our Hearts And Prevent Any Future Wounds.

~We Become Selective, Denying Entry To All We Fear Will Hurt Us. We Filter Out Anyone We Think Owes Us Something. We Withhold Access Until These People Have Paid Their Debts In Full. Eventually, Our Walls Of Protection Become A Prison. At That Point, We Are Not Only Cautious About Who Comes In, But So In Terror Of Future Injuries That We Cannot Venture Outside Our Fortress. Hebrews 12:15;

~If Left Unchecked, Offense Will Turn Into Bitterness. As The Offense Grows, People Are Corrupted... And The Circle Of Corruption Grows Each Time Someone Else Is Told Of The Offense Against You.

~Do Not Take Up Someone Else's Offense... It Is Not Your Offense. Pray About It And Believe For The Resolution.

~Joseph Lost All His Inheritance And Freedom, But Still Had The Right To Choose His Response. He Chose To Forgive!

Genesis 50:20, "You Intended To Harm Me, But God Intended It All For Good. He Brought Me To This Position So I Could Save The Lives Of Many People."

~During His Trials, Joseph Could Not See That His Offenses Were Preparing Him To Rule And Would Result In His Family's Salvation!

~Forgiveness Is The Only Cure For Offense. When We Forgive, We Release The Power Of God To Bring Good Out Of A Bad Situation!

~Romans 8:28, "And We Know That All Things Work Together For Good To Them That Love God, To Them Who Are The Called According To His Purpose."

~Like In The Story Of The Prodigal Son... The Church Is Filled With "Older Brothers" Who Are Judgmental, Have A Strong Sense Of Entitlement, And Demand From God And Others That Things Work Out The Way They See Fit.

~Often We Want The Offender To Feel The Same Amount Of Pain We Feel. We Want Them To Know How Much We Are Suffering Because They Hurt Us. We Want Vengeance! We Want The Pleasure Of Seeing Someone Who Hurt Us Get It Back And Then Some.

~Joseph Chose Not To Repay Evil For Evil, Rather He Repaid Good For The Evil Done To Him.

~When We Resent Or Hate Someone, We Place Ourselves In The Position Of Judgement Over That Person.

~But When We Sit In Judgment And Condemnation Of Others, We Forget Our Own Sinfulness And Weakness.

~John 8:7, "Let The One Without Sin Cast The First Stone."

~If We Cannot Free People From Their Wrongs, Then We Ultimately Enslave Ourselves To Our Own Painful Past. And By Fastening Ourselves To The Past, We Let Their Hate Become Our Future.

~So How Do We As Christians Pursue Forgiveness? Where Do We Begin?

~We Start By Being Clear That When Someone Has Wronged Us, It Means They Owe Us... They Have A Debt With Us.

~They Have Taken Something From Us By Hurting Us.

~By This, We Admit The Hurt Is Real, And We Do Not Just Brush It Aside And Say, As So Many Christians Say, "It Is Not Such A Big Deal."

~This Is Often A Prideful Attitude;

~We'd Like It To Appear That No One Can Hurt Us Because We Are Spiritually Strong, Or We Just Don't Care About Such Things.

~The Only Antidote Is To Forgive, To Absorb The Cost Of The Debt Yourself. We Pay The Price Ourselves And Refuse To Exact The Price Out Of The Other Person In Any Way. ~It Frees The Offender From The Penalty For A Sin. We Don't Require Them To Pay It; Instead, We Pay The Price Ourselves.

Eph.4:32, "Be Kind And Compassionate To One Another, Forgiving Each Other, Just As In Christ God Forgave You".

~When We Forgive In This Way, We Honor God And Demonstrate Christ-Likeness To One Another.

~ Joseph Proved That When Your Faith Is Under Fire, The Issue Is Not About Our Pain, But About The Healing Love Of God In Christ.