

HELEN SANDERS

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THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

We all have that person that just “gets to us”. You know the one, you avoid them when you see them from a distance, and you tend to act like you don’t see them. You may even justify your feeling this way because of a deep hurt. If you continue to stay in that place eventually, unforgiveness will take over and you will end up being bitter.

Did you know forgiveness is a gift that you give yourself? It releases you from the hurts and betrayals. How do I know this? Experience my friends, experience.

Peter and John had an ongoing rivalry. John called himself *“the disciple that Jesus “loved”* ((John 21:7) while Peter asked Jesus *“How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him....?”* This irritation ceased after the resurrection. Peter and John were solid with each other and did many things together. The difference? The Holy Spirit in both of them changed them from the inside out.

We are reminded in Mark 11 that we must forgive if we are to be forgiven. Yes, we have to do it first! We might say, “well you don’t know what they did to me.” Yet there is no excuse not to forgive, no matter what the situation was. When Jesus was dying on the cross, he could have sent ten thousand angels to destroy those that crucified him, but instead he said, *“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”* (Luke 23:34).

Jesus is our example. If in his dying breath he forgave, we can do it while we live, and see the power of forgiveness change us!