

Removing Barriers to the Father's Love (pt.4)

1. The Father wants us not only to know the TRUTH of his love (agape), but also to experience the TOUCH of his love (phileo). God wants us to have something more than DOCTRINAL UNDERSTANDING; he wants us to have a RELATIONAL EXPERIENCE. Doctrines inform us; love transforms us. Doctrines expose sin; love extinguishes sin.
2. Barriers to experiencing the Father's love include:
 - a. Father of Lies
 - b. Faulty Teaching
 - c. Father Images
3. Removing the barriers to the Father's love:
 - a. Recognize the Father's true identity
 - b. Repent of your sins against the Father
 - c. Step three....

I. FORGIVING THOSE WHO HAVE SINNED AGAINST US

Matthew 6:14-15 (NIV) *For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

1. Jesus models this for us most powerfully from his prayer on the cross: "*Father, forgive them...*"
 - a. For those who sin against us, we must release them to the Father.
 - b. Forgiving others releases us from our self-made prisons of bitterness, unforgiveness, anger, etc.
2. Receiving God's love requires us to forgive others, especially our earthly fathers. Here are some of the necessary steps in the forgiveness process.
 - a. Do not go on waiting for them to make it right.
 - b. Break the focus on them which may be causing you to become like them in negative ways.
 - c. Do not remain vulnerable to the generational sins that trouble you.
 - i. Unforgiveness is a bridge that allows your past to inhabit your present.
 - d. Releasing those who sin against us prepares us to fully embrace our Father in heaven.

- e. Releasing others from their sin against you means to relate to them in an adult manner.
 - f. Remember that forgiveness just takes one; reconciliation takes two.
3. Barriers to the Father's love often form strongholds which the enemy inhabits. As God inhabits the praises of his people (Psalm 22:2), the enemy inhabits areas of unforgiveness and other works of darkness. Strongholds inhabited by the enemy must be torn down with spiritual tools and weapons.

Colossians 1:12-14 (NIV) *and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV) *For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*