

The most common reason for granting a divorce in a no-fault state is “irreconcilable differences.” It doesn’t matter what the differences are or how hard or what has been done to try and reconcile them. If one checks the box marked “irreconcilable differences,” one is almost assured to get the divorce they seek.

Irreconcilable differences appear to be an accepted part of life in our world today. I believe that the problem lies not in the differences but in the self-centered desire to not reconcile.

We live in a culture in which the only thing better than being a hero is being a victim. A hero gets 15 minutes of fame. A victim gets a lifetime of sympathy and excuses. As long as there is no reconciliation then the victim has the right to demand penance from the victimizer. If a victim reconciles with the victimizer, they give up power and control over that person.

Victims who fail to be reconciled, fail to follow the example of Christ on the cross. In Luke 23:34 Jesus asks that God forgive those who stood around the cross exulting in his execution. As the words are leaving his lips, the soldiers are dividing his clothes among themselves.

Clearly Jesus was innocent and undeserving of such treatment. Yet, he did not hold onto the offense and become bitter. He did not wait for them to come and make it up to him. He didn’t even demand an apology, a confession of wrong doing, or a plea for forgiveness. He freely offered it. Why? So that the the world might be reconciled to God. It is for this reason that we must insure that we are not irreconcilable.

Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:1-5

I. Irreconcilable

A. Root Word

1. English

- a. Reconcile = to put people back on friendly terms
- b. Reconciliation involves a changed relationship from enmity to harmony between two parties
- c. The absolutely irreconcilable person who, being at war, refuses to lay aside his enmity or to listen to terms of reconciliation

2. Greek

- a. *a* = without
- b. *sponde* = drink offering
 - i. Drink offerings were part of the offerings that were to be made twice daily for the forgiveness of sins.

B. Root Cause

1. Unforgiveness

- a. Lord’s prayer - Matt. 6:12, 14-15
 - i. The forgiveness we receive is proportional upon the forgiveness we give
- b. Unforgiving servant - Matt. 18:21-35
 - i. As Christians we have been forgiven much
 - ii. The forgiveness we have received is much greater than any we can ever give
 - iii. Failure to forgive can result in bondage
- c. Ministry of reconciliation - 2 Cor. 5:18-20
 - i. It’s hard to preach reconciliation to God if we are not reconciled with each other

- ii. Jesus taught us to be reconciled to one another before seeking forgiveness from him (Matt. 5:23-24)
- iii. Jesus taught us to forgive without end (Matt. 18:21-22)
- iv. Jesus taught us to forgive without having to be asked for forgiveness (Luke 23:34)

This week, one of the daily devotions that I did with Haddon was on the subject of forgiveness. This is what it said:

Bitterness is a form of self-punishment; forgiveness is a means of self-liberation. Bitterness focuses on the injustices of the past; forgiveness focuses on the blessings of the present and the opportunities of the future. Bitterness is an emotion that hurts you; forgiveness is a decision that empowers you. Bitterness is foolishness; forgiveness is wisdom. Bitterness imprisons you; forgiveness sets you free.

When you lose yourself in bitterness and unforgiveness, you become irreconcilable. It is impossible to honor the Lord and fulfill the task to which he has called you, if you are irreconcilable.

Where are you at in relationship to others this morning? Are you harboring bitterness and unforgiveness against someone? If so, you are allowing that offense, injustice, or perceived wrong to hamper your relationship with God. Will you take our time of invitation to give the situation to God and ask him for the strength to forgive?