

# ARM Prison Outreach International

## "Ministers' Minute" Volume 12 Number 3

### "How to Get Over a Hurt" -- Ephesians 4:26-32

This "MM" is the 3rd of 2013 -- and the 135<sup>th</sup> email sermon overall. "Ministers' Minute" is a free service of encouragement to preachers, chaplains, donors, and Christian workers around the world. This sermon is the fourth in our current series on the Lord's Prayer. Parts 1-6 are archived at the address below. Use it as a devotional, edit it, share it, or use components of it!

May God bless your labors! -- Rod Farthing, Development Director

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## **ARM FAST FACT**

### American Bible Academy Update

#### Jan-Feb 2013 Summary

**1,466** courses were sent to NEW ENROLLEES!

**2,962** courses were sent to UPPER CLASSMEN!

**4,428** total courses were sent to prisoners!

**COURSES MAILED JAN THRU DEC 2012: 28,610**

**An average of 78 courses sent DAILY! New enrollees: 32**  
**per day!**

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### **"How to Get Over a Hurt" - Part 2**

**Matt 6:12-14 Prov 20:22 Rom 12:19 Eph 4:26-32 Luke 6:27-28**

It was 1997. At New York's Shea Stadium baseball commissioner Bud Selig announced that number 42 would be retired by the major leagues forever. It was a mark of honor for the man who had worn that number--the man who broke baseball's color barrier in 1947: Jackie Robinson. To do that, Jackie had to have

the ability to refuse to be vengeful. But how many of us know that the source of Robinson's ability to turn the other cheek was his faith in Jesus Christ.

Robinson was born in 1919 into a culture steeped in racism. And from early childhood it drove Robinson mad. Historian Jackson Lears, writing in the *New Republic*, says Robinson had "a reputation as a mad brawler, always ready to smash in the teeth of any white man who insulted him." Later, at UCLA, he gained a reputation as a thug.

But it was also at UCLA that Robinson began to encounter the forces that would free him from some of his rage. One was a nursing student named Rachel Isum, whom he later married. The other was a black minister named Karl Downs, whose hard-hitting sermons taught Robinson Christianity.

By 1945 Robinson had developed a firm conviction that God had an important purpose for his life. That purpose became clear when Robinson was summoned to the office of Branch Rickey, general manager for the Brooklyn Dodgers. Rickey was determined to make history by putting the first black player on a major league team. But first Rickey made certain Robinson understood what he would face: everything from racial slurs to physical assaults to hotel clerks refusing him accommodations.

Rickey challenged Robinson, telling him he was "looking for a ballplayer with guts enough to avoid fighting back" -- a phrase that has since become legendary. What is less well known is that Rickey also handed Robinson a copy of a book by Giovanni Papini called *The Life of Christ*. And he reminded Robinson of the words of Jesus: "Resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

By quoting Scripture, Lears writes, Rickey "was hitting Robinson in the heart, invoking the Christianity that they shared."

Robinson's struggle began as soon as he walked out onto the ball field wearing a Dodgers uniform. During his ten years with the Dodgers, he endured racist remarks, death threats, and unfair calls by umpires. But Robinson's faith helped him keep his anger in check. Every night, he got on his knees and prayed for self-control. "Through all the frustrations," writes Lears, "his Christianity sustained him."

Robinson left baseball in 1956. Despite personal tragedies and setbacks, Robinson's faith in Christ never wavered. The man whose faith in Christ helped him to resist the temptation to vengeance and to overcome racial prejudice made baseball history and became a great national legend.

In the Lord's prayer, Jesus said (Matthew 6:12,14) Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 14 For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. That part of the prayer prompts two questions- WHY & HOW? We dealt with "why" last week. Let's deal with the how today. One question I heard last week was, "I know why we should forgive, but **HOW DO WE FORGIVE? HOW DO WE GET OVER A HURT?**

## **1. Before you are hurt, commit in advance to avoid retaliation!**

**Proverbs 20:22** *Do not say, "I'll pay you back for this wrong!" Wait for the LORD, and he will deliver you.*

**Romans 12:19** *Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.*

You can try to get even, or you can trust God to settle the score! Who do you think will do a better job? You or God? It took a commitment IN ADVANCE for Jackie Robinson to avoid retaliation. We must do the same. One of the reasons this is a wise approach is this: THOSE WHO RETALIATE PAY THE HIGHEST PRICE.

Dale Carnegie tells a story of how he went to Yosemite and saw a grizzly bear eating a bunch of garbage. Grizzlies have no fear- biggest baddest animal in North America. Carnegie tells how the grizzly was scaring off all the other animals, but a skunk walked up and started eating with the bear. The bear left the skunk alone. **He understood the high price of getting even.** Revenge is a boomerang that always hurts the one taking it. Don't retaliate! But ... DECIDE IN ADVANCE!

## **2. When you are hurt, deal with it immediately.**

**Ephesians 4:26** *In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry. If you hold on to anger it becomes resentment and hate. Resolve it now! The Living Bible says, "Don't sin by nursing your grudge"*

Four options when you are hurt- You can ***nurse it***- Poor me, pity party ***curse it***- I

hate that person **rehearse it**- keep going over it again and again and watch it grow

**Disperse it**- let it go; deal with it immediately!

Failing to do this will rob you of your joy! Some of us here need to take action today- Letter, Phone call. Don't let your emotions stop you from doing what you know you ought to do! Emotion follows motion - do the right thing and the feelings will follow.

### **3. After you have been hurt, forgive, whether they ask or not. Christ did!**

**Ephesians 4:32** *Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

How readily did Christ forgive you? On the cross, "*Father forgive them, they know not...*" Jesus took the initiative before anybody asked to be forgiven. We need to forgive people whether or not they ask or accept it! They should ask. We hope they deal with their guilt. When they do, convey forgiveness. But being bitter and justifying our withholding of mercy by their delay only hurts us!  
(Repeat)

God wants you to become like Jesus and one of His best qualities is the way He forgives us! AND THIS CLARIFICATION IS IMPORTANT:

FORGIVENESS IS NOT saying, "It's no big deal." It is a big deal...we hop the offender does deal with it and deal with it soon.

FORGIVENESS IS NOT saying, "Forget it." Jesus still wants all offenders to repent of our sins.

FORGIVENESS IS NOT demanding they change before you forgive them. God forgives us long before we have the power & discipline to change, aren't we glad?

FORGIVENESS IS, HOWEVER, RESPONDING TO HURT JUST LIKE JESUS! HE SAID, "I LOVE YOU AND THOUGH YOUR SIN WAS GREAT, I WILL KEEP ON LOVING YOU AND TREAT YOU AS IF YOU'D NEVER HURT ME  
Which means...

### **4. After you've forgiven them, do good to them.**

**Luke 6:27, 28** *"But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do*

*good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.*

Don't react with bitterness or revenge: take the high road. Four positive actions in that verse.

- [1] **LOVE**- this is meeting their needs not what they deserve! God did this for us!
- [2] **DO GOOD**- Return good for evil- [Romans 12]. Buy them a book, candy, flowers- may not change them but it will have an effect on you.
- [3] **BLESS**- Speak positively to and about those who curse you. Don't get caught in the trap of mudslinging. When criticized, never criticize back!
- [4] **PRAY**- It is difficult to pray for somebody and hate them at the same time.

Why do these things? As long as you hate somebody or hold a grudge against someone, that person controls you. Some of us are allowing people who hurt us years ago to still hurt us because of our memories! You can choose to be different than those who have hurt you!

Did you know that resentment actually causes us to be **like** those who have hurt us because we focus on them, and what you focus on you tend to move toward. IE: Children bitter at parents: "I'll never be like my parents!" The way to break the cycle is to forgive them! If you don't learn to **release** that person you will **resemble** them. How can I stop resenting someone? Ask God for the grace to replace bitterness with Love, Doing good, Blessing and Praying.

### **Conclusion**

No one can ruin your life except you! It is the way you choose to respond that makes the difference. One of the quickest ways to ruin your life is harboring resentment. Resentment can eat you up. Some wallow in self-pity while those around them who have suffered bigger hurts go on with joy thru the hurt because they have learned to forgive.

Every one of us has two options: be contagious in their joy and love of life, and or be cranky and bitter in spite of their faith. The difference may be in this one principle from scripture.

Bruce Goodrich was being initiated into the cadet corps at Texas A & M University. One night, Bruce was forced to run until he dropped -- but he never got up. Bruce Goodrich died before he even entered college.

A short time after the tragedy, Bruce's father wrote this letter to the administration, faculty, student body, and the corps of cadets: "I would like to take this opportunity to express the appreciation of my family for the great outpouring of concern and

sympathy from Texas A & M University and the college community over the loss of our son Bruce. We were deeply touched by the tribute paid to him in the battalion. We were particularly pleased to note that his Christian witness did not go unnoticed during his brief time on campus."

Mr. Goodrich went on: "I hope it will be some comfort to know that we harbor no ill will in the matter. We know our God makes no mistakes. Bruce had an appointment with his Lord and is now secure in his celestial home. When the question is asked, 'Why did this happen?' perhaps one answer will be, 'So that many will consider where they will spend eternity.'" --Our Daily Bread, March 22, 1994

Did you sense the freedom that Mr. Goodrich found in forgiveness? Do you see that he refused to heap bitterness on top of his grief? Do you see that he ministered to others with mercy even while he avoided putting himself into a prison of resentment?

What is your choice? I pray that you'll so rejoice in the mercy of God that you'll share it generously and continuously with others. "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy."

Prayer and Invitation.

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**Remember: All "Ministers' Minutes" are archived at:**

**<http://www.abarc.org/Resources/Ministers%20Minutes/Ministers%20Minutes.htm>**

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