

Challenge: Does Forgiveness bring happiness?

In the film Hotel Rwanda Paul Rusesabagina a Hutu, manages the Hôtel des Mille Collines and lives a happy life with his Tutsi wife and their three children. But when Hutu military forces initiate a campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Tutsi minority, Paul is compelled to allow refugees to take shelter in his hotel. As the U.N. pulls out, Paul must struggle alone to protect the Tutsi refugees in the face of the escalating violence later known as the Rwandan genocide.

The Rwandan genocide which took place in 1994, one million people were brutally murdered, most of them murdered were members of the Tutsis ethnic group at the hands of another ethnic group the Hutus.

Peace is now or more or less restored in Rwanda, but it begs the question how did Tutsi's forgive the Hutus for the atrocities committed?

Nelson Mandela, was a South African [anti-apartheid](#) revolutionary. He fought against the discrimination black people faced in South Africa. He was arrested and imprisoned in 1962, and subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment for conspiring to overthrow the state. He spent 27 years in prison most of it in Robben Island. In 1990 he was released. Four years later he served as President of South Africa following the dismantling the anti-apartheid regime. In 1993 he won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to bring peace to South Africa.

One of his most famous quotes is as follows:

“Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies.” Nelson Mandela.

The question arises how did he manage to forgive for people who put him in prison for 27 years.

Closer to home, we had the Northern Ireland conflict began in 1968 when between republican and unionists paramilitaries. Over the next 30 years, Nationalists and Loyalists bombed and murdered each other. However in 1998, they say down negotiate a peace agreement called the Good Friday agreement. Since then the violence has disappeared and peace has been restored to Northern Ireland

The question also arises how Republicans and Loyalists forgive each other and reconcile their differences?

It is said that forgiveness is the key to a happier future. It helps relationships and societies to heal and work. It is said that those who forgive have less anger and stress in comparison to those who hold onto anger and resentment.

However forgiveness can be hard, and so we can pray as in the Father for the power to forgive:

“Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us”

So this this week, why not try this out as an experiment

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