

*January 2016*

**From the Desk of Rev. Chuck**

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Dear Friends,

I was on the phone this week with family and friends and as we talked the conversations centered on how 2015 unfolded in their lives. For many of them the year was mixed with joy and sadness, gains and losses, adventures and mishaps. Ultimately what we all agreed on was that lessons were learned and transformations had taken place because of them.

What struck me about the experiences everyone was sharing was that when love was expressed, instead of fear, the transformations created a sense of greater good and peace in their lives.

As 2015 becomes history, so too can all our negative experiences that we do not want to bring with us into 2016. It is true that within each of us we have the gift of love in our hearts. However, sometimes it very hard to release this power into the world and bless those who have hurt us with it. And yet, the key to all positive, life affirming transformation lies within us.

St. Paul, when speaking to the Romans, talked about being transformed by the renewing of our minds. By getting rid of all the old patterns of thought that keep us in bondage to hurt, pain, and suffering we are free to move forward on our spiritual path of soul growth and healing.

Sometimes going through the transformative process can be difficult for people because it requires that we use the two keys that make it work: forgiveness and non-resistance. Just as forgiveness is a major key in our ever on-going process of transformation, the lack of it is one of our biggest stumbling blocks for our soul growth.

Martin Luther King, Jr., who used both of these keys, once wrote: *"He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. It is impossible even to begin the act of loving one's*

*enemies without the prior acceptance of the necessity, over and over again, of forgiving those who inflict injury upon us. It is also necessary to realize that the forgiving act must always be initiated by the person who has been wronged, even if that person is you.*

Gary Zukav, in his book, The Seat of The Soul, states:

*An authentically empowered person is one who forgives. Forgiveness is not a moral issue. It is an energy dynamic which is tied to the energy of the soul and its relationship with the power of divine love.*

*Forgiveness means that you do not carry the baggage of an experience. When you choose not to forgive, the experience that you do not forgive sticks with you.*

There are times when we know that forgiveness is paramount to our sense of health and well-being and so we move forward with this desire in our hearts only to be stopped dead in our tracks. That person refuses our desire to offer an apology, in fact they go out of their way to continue to make our life miserable by creating conflicts out of nothing. So what do we do?

Use the other key that goes with forgiveness and that's nonresistance. And just like, forgiveness, nonresistance must also come from the heart. The act of nonresistance requires that we let go and let God do what God does best, help us heal what needs to be healed within ourselves.

The fact that an apology is not accepted should never be a reason for us to keep the situation, circumstance, or experience from moving forward with our own transformation. When an old feeling of hurt and pain arises from the memory of the event, don't fight it, for it will only grow.

Instead, use the act of nonresistance to let it move through you blessing the feeling with love and forgiveness. And the more you practice to let go and let God then we will find that the effects of nonresistance are peace, tranquility, and serenity, which will lead you to a greater transformation of your life and affairs.