

## **The Power of Forgiveness**

### **How Can We Forgive Others?**

**Meaning of forgiveness: A conscious, deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance toward a person or group who has harmed you, regardless of whether they actually deserve your forgiveness. Forgiveness does not mean forgetting or condoning or excusing offenses**

**I John 1:9- If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

**Hebrews 8:12- For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.**

**Psalm 103:10-12: He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards those who fear Him, as far as the east is from the west, far has He removed our transgressions from us.**

**Lord's Prayer: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, give us our daily bread and forgive those who trespass against us as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation , but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen**

### **Forgiveness is NOT:**

- (1) Saying the offense did not matter or we were not hurt by what the person did.**
- (2) Being able to make sense of why the person did what he or she did.**
- (3) Acting as if the event never happened.**
- (4) Dependent on the offender apologizing first or changing their behavior.**
- (5) Letting those who did wrong avoid the consequences of their action.**
- (6) Letting the offender hurt us or other innocent people again.**
- (7) Trusting a person again right after they hurt us.**

### **Bring YOUR PAIN TO CHRIST**

- (1) Forgiveness is hard**
- (2) God alone enables us to forgive  
(I Peter 2:24-And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; by His wounds you were healed.)**
- (3) Speak the truth - you were hurt. (Ephesians 4:25-Therefore laying aside falsehood speak truth each one of you with his neighbor for we are members of one another).**
- (4) When Jesus heals Bring your pain to the cross and release to Jesus, we will be able to forgive those who have hurt us.**

### **For those who are not sorry about their Behavior**

- (1) God loves us no matter what (Rom. 5:8-God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.)**
- (2) From the cross, "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing (Lk 23:34)**
- (3) Pray for them!**

## **ALLOW TIME FOR THE PROCESS**

- (1) At first, we will still feel the pain as we remember**
- (2) Take the parts that hurt to Jesus**
- (3) The commitment to forgive often comes before the feelings of forgiveness.**
- (4) Bringing hurts to Jesus over and over, we will begin to feel less pain when we remember.**
- (5) It is a slow process that may have to be repeated over and over.**
- (6) Don't be surprised if "related hurts" come up during the act of forgiveness.**

## **LET WRONG DOERS FACE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ACTIONS.**

- (1) By forgiving, we allow God to judge; take revenge (Romans 12:19-Never take your own revenge beloved but leave room for the wrath of God for it is written "Vengeance is mine I will repay" says the Lord)**
- (2) God uses authorities to deal with those who break the law (Romans 13:1-4)**
- (3) God is still with us as with Joseph. (Gen. 39:20-23)**
- (4) God's love sustains us and never stops seeking us. (Psalm 23:6 – Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life" and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever)**

## **What are some common sayings about forgiveness in our society?**

- (1) Move on and forget it!**
- (2) What comes around goes around.**
- (3) Live and let live.**
- (4) Need to get even.**
- (5) Man up**

### How do they compare with what the Bible tells us?

- (1) If God forgives us we can forgive others!**
- (2) Need to pray for them to forgive them.**
- (3) Lord you have forgiven me for everything. How can I not forgive others? Ephesians 4:32**

### Why does God want us to forgive others?

- (1) Forgiveness frees us from anger and bitterness (2 Corinthians 2:10-11: Anyone you forgive, I also forgive. And what I have forgiven-if there was anything to forgive-I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake that satan might not outwit us for we are not unaware of his schemes.)**
- (2) Forgiving others allows us to receive God's forgiveness. (Matt. 6:14-15: For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.)**
- (3) Forgiveness shows that we understand Christ's sacrifice and our salvation (1 John 4:10- In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His son to be a propitiation for our sins.)**
- (4) Forgiveness allows us to be reconciled with those who have offended us (as both parties repent, forgive).**
- (5) Forgiveness can sometimes change the person who offended us.**

### What do you find is the hardest thing about forgiving someone?

- (1) It is a struggle.**
- (2) What they did to you.**
- (3) Need to get even.**
- (4) They need to pay.**
- (5) Hard to forget.**
- (6) I want to get off easy but I want the max penalty for them.**

**What helps the most to forgive others.**

- (1) Pray for them.**
- (2) Need to realize the importance of God's forgiveness.**
- (3) Story of Joseph**
- (4) Jesus died for our sins not knowing if it would make a difference.**

**What if we are the ones who caused the offense?**

**We need to repent:**

- (1) Allow God's spirit to show us how much our sin hurts God and others (James 4:8-9; 2 cor. 7:10)**
- (2) Take responsibility for what we have done and clearly state our sin (Proverbs 28:13; Ps, 32:3-5)**
- (3) Seek God's forgiveness of our sin, then accept that God has done so (1 John 1:9)**
- (4) Ask those we have offended to forgive us, without excusing ourselves, blaming them, or demanding they trust us again right away (James 5:16)**
- (5) Show our repentance by our actions (Acts 26:20b)**
- (6) If it is possible pay back what was taken (Num. 5:5-7)**

**Forgiveness Exercise**

**If you need to forgive someone.**

- (1) What do you need to forgive them for?**
- (2) How did their actions make you feel?**
- (3) Prayer Lord please help me to forgive them**
- (4) It made me feel.....**

**If you need to be forgiven for something you have done:**

- (1) What harm did you do to them?**
- (2) How might you have made them feel?**
- (3) Prayer Lord please help them forgive me for what I have done.**

**Read 1 John 1:9-If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**