

## FORGIVENESS BASICS

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Mark 11:22-26

Forgiveness is essential to maintaining commitment in our relationship to God, family, and community. We must be able to FORGIVE.

Philippians 3:8-14

The present is eternal-it is always with us. It has always been with us, and it will always be with us. The present is more important to us than either the past or the future. The past lives only in our memory. We cannot let the past memories rob us of the present moment with its opportunities and vitality. Failures, disappointments, disillusionments, mistakes, or losses should not be allowed to intrude upon our present life.

The past has been buried-do not resurrect it again; to live again in that that has passed away. Do not be a “has-been” but a “now am” (Heb 11:1). Time is largely wasted thinking on the past. God is here now. Ever-living, Ever-present, source of good (John 8:58; Luke 18:19). God’s present help heals the past.

Your future is bound up in your present. What you are thinking and doing today is the pattern of what you will be doing tomorrow. Actually, there is no tomorrow, for today is always here. You waste today, you waste tomorrow.

***Luke 9:24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.***

Isa. 43:18-19, Jer 31:31-36, 2 Cor. 5:17, Job 12:14, Rev. 3:7, Rom. 8:1-14

Premise: God gives those in Christ a new nature to redirect their purpose. The past life, with memories of hurts and offences, try to hold open doors (wounds) that God desires to close through forgiveness. This causes two paths or a “frozen” position, thereby: stagnating life and the move of God’s spirit. We must forgive and close out the past.

Mark 4:5, 16-17; Luke 8:6, 14; Matt. 6:25-34

“Clearing Stones”. Hurts and wounds force us to be committed to self. To love God-we must commit to Him. We do not have to worry about ourselves for now He is committed to us. We can serve and proceed in the things we must do to bring Him his Glory.

“Stones”- are mostly issues that hinder spiritual growth. Creates functional non-forgivers similar to those who are “functional alcoholics.”

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Eph 4:26-27; Ps 41:9; Ps. 55:12-14, 20-21

Let go of the anger, if not resentment comes. You can be wounded more by “who did it” than the “what was done”. Expectations are failed greater and emotions run deeper depending on who trespassed against you. Resentment blocks forgiveness and is the seedling of a grudge. A grudge is the sapling of bitterness. Bitterness is a cancer of the soul.

***Having resentment is like you drinking poison and hoping the person that has hurt you dies!***

### RULES FOR HANDLING HURT FEELINGS

1. Don't curse it (the “why me” attitude)
2. Don't nurse it (give it the care it seeks)
3. Don't rehearse it (keep repeating what happened)
4. Don't disperse it (pass it on to everyone you meet)

*If you refrain from the above*

5. God will reverse it (“vengeance is mine saith the Lord”)

James1:1-12

James gives us clues of how to deal with the pain of offences. A Biblical perspective. We are similar to oysters in how humanly we try to deal with hurts. A grain of sand gets into the soft tissue area of the oyster-its tender place. The oyster secretes a milky substance to coat the irritating grain of sand. The sharp edge feeling dissipates to the oyster feeling smoother, but yet irritating. The oyster coats it again and again; yet the problem still exists. This how pearls come to be. We will cover our pain and bury the wound deeper and deeper. Trying to cope. The wounding is not your fault, but the subsequent hardening (stones) will be. Only by forgiving can we become free. Forgiveness is a spiritual remedy for your spiritual problem.

2 Tim.2:24-26; three things taught:

- We can oppose ourselves
- We can be taken captive by the devil at his will
- We can be given repentance, see the truth, and recover ourselves from this captivity.

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Satan enters through a wounded place. Our unwillingness to forgive keeps the offense alive instead of healed. It becomes a button that the devil can push at any time he desires too.

Something of note: Jesus-Never spoke in tongues. Jesus performed miracles, so did the magicians of Egypt. Jesus had power over the devil, so did the disciples before they received the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. However, the greatest attribute Jesus exemplified was that He manifested the power over self! Jesus had the power to forgive (Luke 23:34). John 14:30 "... the prince of this world has nothing in me.

Phil 2:5-8; 4:11-13-You don't have to be Jesus to forgive like Him, just have Jesus!

### **Forgiveness is in four areas-**

The act of forgiveness is a spiritual act. It goes beyond the physical and emotional states. We need the power of the Spirit to help you make the decision to forgive. Feelings are a variable that affect us, but the act of forgiveness is beyond emotion.

The "how to" steps to facilitate forgiveness.

- "I'm sorry" is not enough. You should ask forgiveness for the specific offense.
- Interaction on this level brings closure.
- People are clear about what is being discussed.
- People are clear about what remains unfinished business.
- One person is asking specifically, and one person responds specifically.

Feelings may not dissipate; wounds may still sting. These are emotional and physical areas. The process starts in the spirit and begins the process of healing our emotional pain.

Who do we forgive?

1. The perpetrator-one who committed the offense. The abuser, rejecter, pastor, parent, friend. They hurt us, maybe on purpose, maybe with no knowledge whatsoever. Knowing motive may help your mind compartmentalize it- but it will not matter to your heart. Period- we got hurt.

2. Forgive yourself. If you blame yourself for allowing it to happen-"How could I have been so stupid?" or "How could I have let that happen again?" – This type of thinking puts a target on your head; you begin to aim at yourself. This speaks to your "self-perception"

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It was not your fault. You can wallow in self-directed shame, for example I have heard these statements before: If I would have been a better child, my parents would not be divorced. If I would have dressed different, I would not have been raped.

Refusing to forgive yourself ensures you remain a victim. Feelings are not a fact; however, perception is reality. Forgive yourself for the things you perceive you have done to yourself.

3. Forgive God. Do you believe God is all powerful, omnipotent? Then why did He not intervene in the situation that caused you so much pain?

Matt 11:1-12

Jesus knew we could be offended at Him. John the Baptist was supportive of Jesus ministry-due to his current situation he sought re-enforcement.

Verse 3-5: Jesus lets his actions speak for him.

Verse 6: Jesus knew due to His Omniscience, that our humanity would have more questions. Jesus responded in advance to the questions of the mind- those questions that offend our sense of justice or fairness. For example, could you imagine the questions in the mind of John the Baptist-what have I done to deserve such a senseless end? What glory comes to God from this? Did I do something wrong? Joy replaces bitterness if we choose to let it go.

Verse 7-11: the commitment matters more to God. Commitment speaks to God for you.

We must accept that Jesus will hurt us. Not harm us, but we will suffer pain at His hand for the purpose of His kingdom. The difference between hurt and harm is purpose. Pain with purpose is like the surgeon cutting us to fix us-allows future health and growth. Harm is pain without purpose. This is the Devil's territory-senseless wounds, needless and with no redeeming value. Jesus brings redeeming value-for examples the lives of Job, Joseph, and Paul.

4. Ask God to forgive them. Jesus modeled a higher level of forgiveness to eliminate any self-righteousness toward human offenders. Our motive in what we do for God means so much. To forgive by being motivated that the justice of God will ensure that a person is punished for offending you; may make you feel good-however Jesus did more. It is the MORE that allows us to see the glory of God.

Phil 2:5; Luke 23:33-34; Acts 7:37-60.