

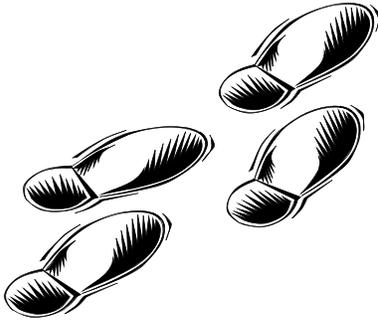
# Forgiveness

## What Forgiveness Is:

- Forgiveness is a decision I make to obey God and to walk in His ways.
- Forgiveness is not allowing someone else's actions or attitudes to control or dictate my actions or attitudes.
- A difficult decision, My emotions scream, "No. I can't forgive," but what I am actually saying is, "I won't forgive."
- Forgiveness is an act of my will. If I do not make this decision, I will have to live with the crippling consequences of my un-forgiveness.
- Forgiveness is getting my own heart right with God.
- Forgiveness is a lifetime-long lifestyle, not a one-time act. It must be continually maintained.
- Realizing a wrong reaction to an offense is just as sinful as the sin against us.
- Forgiveness realizes that my own forgiveness hinges on my willingness to forgive others, as soon as possible.
- Forgiveness is a miracle of God working in me.
- Forgiveness is Godliness. It belongs to the ethics of heaven.
- Forgiveness is a willingness to rebuild a relationship with the one who offended me. (in most cases)
- Forgiveness is to be granted whether there is repentance or not on the part of the offender.

## What Forgiveness Is Not:

- It is not a feeling. It is a decision of my will. (no one feels like forgiving the person that you hurt)
- Forgiveness is not pretending you were not hurt.
- Forgiveness is not justifying the offender. It is not okay with God for them to hurt you. (Col. 3:25)
- Forgiveness does not mean you must immediately trust the offender again. (i.e., rape) Forgiveness and trust are two separate issues. We must forgive and then we can work towards trust.
- Forgiveness is not taking vengeance. God will hold each of us accountable. You are responsible for yourself only.
- Forgiveness is NOT easy. It is costly. It cost God everything and it may cost you.



# Steps of Forgiveness

1. Father God, I choose, as an act of my will, to forgive \_\_\_\_\_.  
I forgive \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_  
(list offenses specifically).
2. Father, I ask that you forgive \_\_\_\_\_ for these things as well, and that you not hold these charges against him/her on my account. As I release \_\_\_\_\_, I ask you to release him/her as well.
3. Father, I ask that you forgive me for holding un-forgiveness, bitterness, resentment, etc. in my heart toward \_\_\_\_\_. I receive your forgiveness now and your cleansing of my heart from all unrighteousness.
4. Father, I also choose not to hold any un-forgiveness toward you for allowing these hurts to happen to me. So I forgive you because I need to and not because you need it.
5. Father God, if there are any more stored up negative feelings in me toward \_\_\_\_\_, I ask that you cleanse them from me. I will be open to replace these negative emotions with the fruit of your Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control).
6. Heavenly Father, I ask that you heal now the wounded places in my soul. Heal my memory of those offenses so that I can look back on them realistically, knowing that they were hurtful, but also knowing that you, Lord, have healed the hurt. Use those experiences for the healing of others with whom I come in contact with.
7. Now Father, I ask that you bless \_\_\_\_\_ with your abundant mercy. Prosper \_\_\_\_\_ in every way; body, soul and spirit.

*(Continue to ask God to bless and prosper this person until all negative feelings toward them are healed. Each time you begin to feel anything toward them, use this as a cue to bless and intercede for them.)*

Scriptures on forgiveness: Mark 11:25, 26; Matt. 6:12; Matt. 6:14-15; Eph. 4:32; John 20:23

# FORGIVENESS

## WHAT IT IS, WHAT IT ISN'T

Forgiveness **IS NOT** forgetting

There are two different types of remembering

Forgiveness **IS NOT** pretending

Forgiveness **IS NOT** a feeling

Forgiveness **IS** . . . not bringing up the past

Forgiveness **IS** . . . not demanding change before we forgive

Forgiveness **IS** rare, because it is hard

Forgiveness **IS** costly and substitutional

### **Bringing up the past is destructive, because . . .**

- There is nothing you can do to change it.
- It takes away from giving your energy to the present and future.
- It makes you responsible at this point for jeopardizing the marriage.
- Even if you were severely offended by dwelling on the offense, you place a continuing burden on your relationship.
- It denies your partner the opportunity to change for the better. This behavior also denies the presence and power of the person of Jesus Christ in a life.
- It does little to elevate you in the eyes of others. An indication of maturity is the desire and willingness to break loose of the past and move forward.

*"Be gentle and ready to forgive; never hold grudges. Remember, the Lord forgave you so you must forgive others." Colossians 3:13*

*"Your heavenly Father will forgive you if you forgive those who sin against you, but if you refuse to forgive them, He will not forgive you." Matthew 6:14-15*

*"Most of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love makes up for many of your faults." Peter 4:8*

*"And we are called to forgive as God has forgiven us. Be as ready to forgive as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you." Ephesians 4:32*

*"Never pay back evil for evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see that you are honest clear through." Romans 12:17*

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# Forgiveness

## THE WRONG WAY

1. I'm sorry IF I was wrong.
2. I'm sorry I did that, I really didn't mean to hurt you.
3. I'm sorry I said what I said, but you were wrong too.
4. I'm sorry. Next time I'll be more careful.

## THE RIGHT WAY

**I was wrong in what I said or did.  
Will you please forgive me?**

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