

Forgiving Others – Lesson

Lesson summary: Unforgiveness is the root of all kinds of problems and addictions in our lives. Forgiving those who have hurt you has incredible power to set you free.

MATTHEW 6:14-15 (NIV)

¹⁴For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Steps of forgiveness:

1. Allow yourself to admit you were wronged

- (a) Don't defend them by saying it wasn't their fault, sin is sin, and wrong is wrong
- (b) Don't try to minimize what happened, it is okay to admit they wronged you even if you love them or feel sorry for them

2. Allow yourself to feel the hurt –

- (a) We don't want to feel hurt or violated, we would rather feel angry, because it makes us feel less weak. But we have to admit we hurt for God to heal the hurt in us.

Often when we have been hurt we want to hurt others. It can be easier than acknowledging that what has been done to you hurt you. We often minimize what has been done to us and say it didn't hurt, or we didn't care, or it didn't matter to us. The point is not how much we loved or liked those who hurt us, or even if they meant to do it. The fact is that we were hurt, and when we begin to allow ourselves to acknowledge that we were hurt, and begin to face that fact, and then authentically forgive them specifically for what they have done, we can begin to see great healing in our lives.

3. Admit the anger and hatred you feel towards them and ask God to take it from you.

4. Surrender the hurt for God to heal through prayer

5. Forgive them completely from your heart.

- (a) It is even good to say it out loud, and be specific about everything they did that hurt you.
 - i. When we forgive specifically, it makes a difference in our own heart.
 - ii. Making a general "I forgive them for everything they did that hurt me" will not bring healing to our hearts.
- (b) Release to God all rights to punish this person for the wrong done against you

6. Choose to pray for them (Luke 6: 27-28)

- (a) Pray for them and ask God to help you love them as he loves them
- (b) Pray for God to show you how He sees them

7. You cannot hold onto unforgiveness and continue to have the power of God in your life to overcome sin and addiction.

- (a) Holding out on God in any area takes away the power you need for freedom.
- (b) There are many miserable Christians who never see the freedom and joy God has for them because they refuse to go through these steps and let go of the hurt.

Have you ever forgiven someone for something they did to you and noticed a difference in your own spirit?