



The Lost Art of Giving Forgiveness

Lesson Ten

The Four Fundamentals of Forgiveness

The Biblical Basis for Being Set Free and Setting Others Free in Christ



- **Receiving Forgiveness** from God is the **FOUNDATION/SOURCE** for recovering the lost art of forgiveness.
- **Being Forgiving** toward others is the **HEART** of recovering the lost art of forgiveness.
- **Asking Forgiveness** is...
 - SUBMITTING** to the Father's **demand** that living in fellowship with Him and one another **be our greatest priority**.
 - HONORING** the Father's **desire** that His children remain in fellowship with Him and one another **as a family**.

Recovering the Lost Art of Giving Forgiveness

"Every healthy relationship is made up of two good forgivers." – Ruth Graham

1. Why Should We Freely Give Forgiveness to Those Who Ask for It?

It Frees Us...

- To **SHOW** one another that freely **receiving forgiveness** from the Father has truly transformed as His children.
- To **MOVE** from the attitude of **being forgiving** into the action of actually giving forgiveness.
- To **GIVE** to those **asking forgiveness** the same grace that the Father has given to each of us in Christ Jesus...*again and again and again*.
- To **MODEL the way** the Father and the Son forgive repentant sinners who ask them for forgiveness.
- To **BEAR** the fruit of the Spirit. *Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 4:29-32*
- To **EXPERIENCE** God's forgiveness of us. *Matthew 6:12, 14-15*
- To **WORSHIP** God without chastisement. *Mark 11:25; Matthew 18:32-35*

2. When Do I Freely Give Forgiveness?

- As soon as you are **REQUESTED** by the offender and possibly can. *Luke 15:17-24*

Bridging the Gap Between Biblical Learning and Radical Living

Q1 Do I have to do it immediately when they ask? What if I need to process their request?

A1 Discipleship is both a **DECISION** and a **DESTINATION**.

Q2 What if they never come and ask or do not even realize what they have done or they are dead?

A2 Our responsibility is to both GO to *ask forgiveness* and GO to *give forgiveness*. *Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15-18*

➤ As soon as you are READY to worship God. *Mark 11:25*

3. How Do I Freely Forgive?

➤ CHOOSE with your redeemed will to freely give the gift of forgiveness from your regenerate heart.

➤ MAKE the promise to lift the burden of guilt and not remember the offense against them.

1) I won't bring it up to the PERSON to use against them.

2) I won't bring it up to OTHERS to use against them.

3) I won't bring it up to MYSELF to use against them.

4) I won't let it be an OBSTACLE to viewing them as God views me in Christ.

*Forgiveness is a
"hard work miracle"!*

➤ SEAL it with your behavior. *Ephesians 4:31-32; Colossians 3:12-15*

➤ TRUST God with the ongoing process of remaining forgiving, keeping the promise, and showing kindness.

Bridging the Gap Between Biblical Learning and Radical Living

Q1 Should I expect this to be easy and a one-time gift?

A1 No! Remember that giving forgiveness is both a decision and a destination!

Q2 Am I on my own in doing this?

A2 No! Remember that your heavenly Father is in the forgiving business and the heart changing business!

Q3 Is it humanly possible to "forgive & forget"?

A3 No! No one can choose to erase the memory banks of the brain.

4. What Barriers Might I Face?

We May Be Tempted to Withhold Forgiveness

➤ Due to a poor self-image that seeks to use the offense to gain attention and/or sympathy.

➤ Due to a need to have control over others in order to be significant and powerful.

➤ Due to being too proud to admit we have been hurt and so try to minimize the offense and avoid humbling ourselves to give forgiveness.

➤ Due to failing to see forgiveness as an act of grace and opportunity to trust the Lord.

➤ Due to a failure to be obedient.

How Can I Break Down These Barriers?

- Remember to *not* forgive is *always* **COSTLIER** than to forgive.
- God never asks us to do anything that He has not first **DONE** for us in Christ and has **ENABLED** us to do in the Spirit.
- We do not have to be controlled by our feelings or a helpless prisoner of our past. *John 8:32, 36*
- Jesus Christ has **SPECIAL** grace for the bruised and wounded by the sins of others. *Luke 4:18; Matthew 11:28-29; Isaiah 42:3-4*
- Reflect on how many **TIMES** a day God forgives you in Christ! *Ephesians 4:32*
- If you have really forgiven, it is never the 2nd, or 7th, or even the 20th time you have forgiven, it is always the **FIRST TIME!**

God and Give the Gift That Keeps on Giving!

Choose to cancel the debt that is owed you when you are asked and then thank the Lord a thousand times for the grace to remain forgiving, to keep the promise, and to show kindness like God in Christ has done for you...again and again and again!