



# The Lost Art of Being Set Free by Forgiveness

Lesson Two

## Our Struggle in the Prison of Unforgiveness

- Forgive him? Are you serious? After what he has done to me? I can **never** forgive him!
  - Forgive me? How could God forgive me? You don't **know** what I have done!
  - How could I have done such an awful thing? I can **never** forgive myself!

As Christ followers we have a moral imperative from our Lord to **RECOVER** the lost art of forgiveness.

*"Forgiveness is a freeing, empowering, refreshing, healing, and joyful experience, which is capable of transforming all of life."  
—Understanding and Facilitating Forgiveness*

### 6 Symptoms of an Unforgiving Spirit

- 1) You can't stand to be around certain people.
- 2) You want to strike out at people when certain subjects are discussed.
- 3) You lose your temper over little things.  
*"There is a chronic anger that grows from the failure to forgive and there is an anger that festers beneath the failure to seek or accept forgiveness." – Understanding and Facilitating Forgiveness*
- 4) You struggle with guilt over things that happened in the past.
- 5) You find yourself hating the ones you should love the most.
- 6) You find your mental, emotional, and physical health failing for uncommon reasons.

## Recovering the Lost Art of Being Set Free by Forgiveness

### 1. **DEFINING** the Lost Art of Being Set Free by Forgiveness.

What Forgiveness is NOT!

- Forgiveness is **not** a **FEELING**.
- Forgiveness is **not** **FORGETTING**.
- Forgiveness is **not** **EXCUSING** or **DENYING**.
- Forgiveness is **not** **IGNORING**.
- Forgiveness is **not** necessarily **TRUSTING** or **RECONCILING**.

*Forgiveness is hard enough work without assuming the fruitless burden of unbiblical definitions and impossible expectations! In fact, understanding what forgiveness is NOT actually lightens the burden.*

## What Forgiveness IS!

- Forgiveness *is* a **DECISION** with four essentials.

*The decision to set someone free from an obligation to you,  
that is a result of a wrong done against you,  
with the promise to never remember it against them in the future.*

### Four Essentials to Forgiveness – Matthew 18:21-35

- 1) **CONFESSING** that a *wrong has been done*.
- 2) **UNDERSTANDING** that a *debt is now owed*.
- 3) **CHOOSING** to *cancel the debt that owed*.
- 4) **KEEPING** a *promise to never come back for later payment*.

- Forgiveness *is* a **CHOICE** we make.

- Forgiveness *is* a **GIFT** we give.

- Forgiveness *is* a **PROMISE** we make.

*Love “does not take into account a wrong suffered” 1Corinthians 13:5 (NAS)*

- 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”!*

## 2. **DISCERNING** Who the Hostage Is that Needs to Be Set Free in Christ.

*Forgiveness is the supernatural talent, sacred skill, and spiritual discipline of setting ourselves and others free in Christ for God's glory, their good, and our joy!*

### What Happens When We Choose to Not Forgive?

- We feel **REJECTED** and **RESENTFUL**.
- We choose to **WITHHOLD ACCEPTANCE (or WHATEVER the Other Person WANTS/NEEDS from Us)**.
- We wait for our **CONDITIONS** to be met.
- We become a **BITTER ROOT**.

**Will the Real Hostage Please Stand Up! Galatians 5:25, 19-21**

### ***5 Reasons the Unforgiving Are the Real Hostages***

- 1) The unforgiving are held hostage by their own **SINFULNESS**.
- 2) The unforgiving are held hostage by their own **BITTERNESS**.
- 3) The unforgiving are held hostage by their own **FEARFULNESS**.
- 4) The unforgiving are held hostage by their own **FOOLISHNESS**.
- 5) The unforgiving are held hostage by their own **HARDNESS**.

***The person who harbors forgiveness in his or her heart always loses and ends up being held hostage by their own unforgiveness.***

### **You Can Recover the Lost Art of Setting Yourself and Others Free in Christ!**

*Because it is a **choice** that God's grace in Christ Jesus makes available to everyone of His children by His indwelling Spirit!*

*Will you **choose** to make this "hard work miracle" a reality in your own life as you forgive the inexcusable in others?*

*As a born-again believer, you have been given this supernatural talent, but you may still need further training in this sacred skill and more practice in this spiritual discipline. But it all begins with a God-given, grace-enabled choice to do for others what your heavenly Father has already done for you in Christ!*