

We are Blessed in Forgiving Others

Forgiving From the Heart

The need to forgive

1. It is required by God (Mt. 6:9-15)
2. It is essential for our freedom (Mt 18:21-35)
 - a. Know the extent of our debt (Lk. 7:47)
 - b. Repayment is impossible
 - c. Mercy is required
 - d. So that no advantage can be taken of you (2 Cor. 2:10, 11)
3. Forgiveness must be extended to others (Eph. 4:31, 32)
4. Why should we forgive? TO STOP THE PAIN!

What is forgiveness?

1. Not forgetting
2. Not tolerating sin
3. Not seeking resentment, revenge or repayment
4. Resolving to live with the consequences of another's sin
5. Not using the past against another person
6. Where is the justice? AT THE CROSS OF CHRIST!

Steps to forgiveness

1. Make a list of all those who have offended you, including all that you have negative feelings toward
2. Face the hurt and the hate
3. Decide that you will bear the burden of their sin and not hold it against them in the future
4. Take it to the cross

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You for the riches of Your kindness, forbearance and patience toward me, knowing that your kindness has led me to repentance. I confess that I have not shown that same kindness and patience toward those who have hurt or offended me [see Romans 2:4]. Instead, I have held onto my anger, bitterness and resentment toward them. Please bring to my mind all the people I need to forgive in order that I may now do so. In Jesus' name I pray Amen.

On a separate sheet of paper, list the names of people who come to your mind. At this point don't question whether you need to forgive them. Often we hold things against ourselves as well, punishing ourselves for wrong choices we've made in the past. Write "myself" at the bottom of your list if you need to forgive yourself. Forgiving yourself is accepting the truth that God has already forgiven you in Christ. If God forgives you, you can forgive yourself!

Lord, Jesus, I choose to forgive [name the person] **for** [what he or she did or failed to do] **because it made me feel** [share the painful feelings, i.e., rejected, dirty, worthless, inferior, etc.].