

UNDERSTANDING FORGIVENESS

FORGIVENESS: *for-give-ness /*

Unforgiveness is a major hinderance to freedom - most often the main one. Forgiveness is usually a precondition to freedom.

Biblical Support:

- **Matthew 18:21-35** - Legality and Debt
- **Luke 6:36-38, Matthew 6:14-16** - Benefits of mercy
- **Mark 11:24-26** - Cause and effect with forgiveness and prayer
- **Matthew 7:1-5** - Judgment

Signs of Unforgiveness:

- Torment
- Hindered prayer
- Ill health
- Destroyed relationships
- Regional hatred
- Hatred and dark energy
- Anxiety and feeling driven
- Heavy heart
- Feeling Constrained
- Rehearsed arguments
- Vengeance
- Avoidance
- Sluggishness
- Powerless
- Anger
- Lack of sound sleep
- Feeling hindered or opposed

Forgiveness is NOT:

- A feeling
- Excusing someone's wrongdoing or forgetting what happened
- A free pass for someone to continue harming or offending us
- A demand to reenter relationship with someone
- Forgetting
- Always one and done

Forgiveness IS:

- A choice to break free from past hurts, regardless of our feelings
- Agreeing to live with the consequences of another person's sin
- A decision to relinquish rights for vengeance
- A way to free ourselves from the hold someone has on our lives
- Something we return to as often as we realize additional ways we have been hurt
- A lifestyle that can shift to a characteristic in me that does not easily take offense, does not "take into account a wrong suffered" and that believes God's best about people

The Components of Effective Forgiveness: **Debt, Judgment, Need**

1. Forgiveness is often about understanding and feeling the **DEBT** owed – counting it up and specifically speaking what was owed and not given. Once the debt list is made, the debt is cancelled and passed to Jesus.
2. Forgiveness is about acknowledging **JUDGMENT**, releasing the person from my judgment and repenting for taking God's role as the judge. Even though the debt is counted and cancelled, we still may be holding judgment against the person who wronged us. This step of repentance and release helps us to declare that God is the true judge, and only He understands the motivations of a person.
3. In this step, we are taking time to **FILL** up the place that was emptied out from all the debt and judgment that was released. We then ask God to fill the legitimate role or to meet the legitimate needs that the person should have met but could not.

Bonus points for any of the following: blessing, speaking mercy, releasing the person to Jesus or asking Jesus to show you how He views the one who wounded you

The Language of Forgiveness:

_____, you owed me _____ (list) _____ but now I pass the debt to you Jesus and cancel it, just like you have cancelled every debt I owe you.

I forgive you _____ for teaching me the lie that _____.

Lord, I repent of my judgment of _____ as if I knew all of the reasons they did what they did. Please forgive me for taking your role and judging them.

I release my judgment against you _____, and I ask God to have mercy on you. I speak blessing and that You God would draw them near to you.

I also release you _____ from having to be the solution to my pain and ask You God to be the One who heals my heart and becomes my provision.

Lord, I feel a strong and real need that was not met by this person. Would it be OK if you met my need for _____?

Father God, because you have forgiven me, I now choose to forgive myself of _____. I also release myself from self-slander and self-hatred.

Lord, I have placed expectations on You and judged You for not meeting them. I have set myself up to be disappointed in You. I want a restored relationship even if I don't always understand.