

Forgiving From The Heart

Wednesday, July 31, 2024 – Escondido, CA
FICM Practicum

“At a glance” notes for the Encourager in facilitating the Forgiveness Step:

- Reassure Inquirer of confidentiality
- Be patient with the Forgiveness Step
- Give Inquirer all the time needed to write down names God brings to their mind, not omitting any, no matter how unrelated it may seem
- Don't interrupt the Inquirer's time with God both when they are making their list and when they are praying through their list
- Have Inquirer forgive one person at a time
- Remind Inquirer to pray, “I **choose** to forgive [name]...”
- Do not allow Inquirer to blame or excuse someone on the list; forgive anyway
- Encouragers and Prayer Partners alike may want to put a hand on the Inquirer's arm to comfort them, but do not touch the Inquirer during the appointment, including in Step 3; let this be their encounter with God
- Let Inquirer feel the pain, and cry if they want to
- If there are no emotions, you might ask if they've heard the lie that negative emotions are wrong; this lie can be renounced
- Reaffirm and assure Inquirer if needed; there is no “right” way to process this Step
- Listen for recurring themes/lies vs truth to record and discuss at the end of the appointment
- Listen for common emotions/triggers of negative emotions to record and discuss at the end of the appointment
- Watch for signs of interference
- Remind Inquirer that forgiveness is between “you and God” not “you and the other person” (usually best to not go to the offender unless that offender has asked you for forgiveness)

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Forgiveness – what it is and is not:

From the Heart (must get to the emotional core)

Obeying (and since God requires us to forgive, it is something we can do)

Remembering (not forgetting, but healing)

Gives our freedom back (no more bitterness from another person's sin)

I choose (a decision of the will)

Vengeance is not an option (choose to reject revenge)

Emotions should be acknowledged (but don't wait until you feel like forgiving)

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Based on “Daily in Christ” a devotional

by Dr. Neil T. Anderson

for the date October 27, titled “Forgiving Your Past”

Why Should You Forgive Those Who Have Hurt You in the Past?

1. Forgiveness is required by God.

Matthew 18:21-35

Matthew 6:14,15

We must base our relationship with God on the same criteria on which God bases His relationship with us, and that includes forgiveness.

2. Forgiveness is necessary to avoid entrapment by Satan.

2 Corinthians 2:10,11

Unforgiveness is an open invitation to Satan’s bondage in our lives.

3. We are to forgive like Christ forgives in order to keep our hearts from bitterness.

Ephesians 4:31,32

Your act of forgiveness will set the captive free, then you will realize that the captive was you.

See also Matthew 5:7, Mark 11:25, Luke 6:37, James 2:13.

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Excerpts from “Daily in Christ” a devotional

by Dr. Neil T. Anderson

April 29

The Choice of Forgiveness

“Most of the ground that Satan gains in the lives of Christians is due to unforgiveness. We are warned to forgive others so that Satan cannot take advantage of us (2 Corinthians 2:10,11). God requires us to forgive others from our hearts or He will turn us over to the tormentors (Matthew 18:34,35). Why is forgiveness crucial to our freedom? Because of the cross. God didn’t give us what we *deserve*; He gave us what we *needed* according to His mercy. We are to be merciful just as our heavenly Father is merciful (Luke 6:36). We are to forgive as we have been forgiven (Ephesians 4:31,32).”

“You don’t forgive someone merely for their sake; you do it for your sake so you can be free. Your need to forgive isn’t an issue between you and the offender; it’s between you and God.”

April 30

The Cost of Forgiveness

"How do you forgive from the heart? First, you acknowledge the hurt and the hate. If your forgiveness doesn’t visit the emotional core of your past, it will be incomplete. This is the great evangelical cover-up. Christians feel the pain of interpersonal offenses, but we won’t acknowledge it. Let God bring the pain to the surface so He can deal with it. This is where the healing takes place.”

“Don’t try to rationalize or explain the offender’s behavior. Forgiveness deals with your pain, not another’s behavior. [...] freeing yourself from the past is the critical issue.”

Forgive

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (Phil. 4:13)

☞ Forgiveness Is Not...

- pretending that what happened doesn't matter, because it does
- pretending that what hurt you was ok, because it wasn't
- putting up with sin
- forgetting

☞ Forgiveness Is...

- being honest with God about what happened, who did it, and how it made you feel
- trusting that God is the righteous judge who will make everything right in the end
- not seeking revenge (Rom. 12:19)
- for your own benefit
- from your emotional core

☞ Forgive Because...

- it stops the pain (removes the hook that attaches you to the pain from the past) (Psalms 103:3-5)
- it's required by God (Matt. 6:14-15)
- it's essential for your freedom (Matt. 18:32-35)
- of your debt to God to extend the mercy and grace He gives you to others (Luke 6:36)
- it's removing from Satan an opportunity in your life (2 Cor. 2:10-11)
- it moves you forward in your relationship with God (Psalm 32:1-2a; 103:8)

If you still have thoughts that you haven't forgiven the person, ask the Holy Spirit to show where the unforgiveness is, then forgive. If nothing comes to you, the thoughts are from the enemy. Ignore him, or declare "Yes I have forgiven".

☞ Forgive From The Heart

- **Dear God, I choose to forgive...**[name of person] **for...**[specifically what they did or failed to do], **which made me feel...**[verbally tell God every hurt and pain He brings to your mind].

☞ Choose To...

- Forgive quickly and often (Matt. 18:21-22)
- Not wait until you feel like forgiving