

MOVING BEYOND THE PAST

Lesson 6: Forgiveness and Inner Healing

Introduction: When we have been wounded by others we are left broken and wounded by the pain and destruction of what has been done to us. When we have been wounded by others we at times make sinful choices how we handle the wounding and we experience pain and destruction by our own sinful choices. We certainly struggle with forgiving those who have sinned against us, and many times struggle with forgiving God (because we may blame Him), and forgiving ourselves. Through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross, we can experience forgiveness from God and we can have the ability to forgive others and ourselves. God desires to set us completely free and to heal every wound.

I. Forgiveness and Inner Healing Through Jesus Christ

A. We receive forgiveness through the cross.

1. Christ's death on the cross was sufficient for our forgiveness and healing.
 - a. Though we deserved death and punishment for our sin, Christ took our sin upon Himself by dying on the cross, and He paid the price we no longer have to pay. He took our pain, our guilt, our shame, our condemnation, our sin and our wounds upon Himself. We find forgiveness and healing through the cross. Isaiah 53:5 "*But He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him and by His wounds we are healed,*" (Joh 8:36, Romans 5:20-21, Romans 6:14, Romans 8:1)
2. You have no past! (Psalms 103:8-12, II Corinthians 5:17)

II. Forgiveness and Inner Healing Through Forgiving Others

A. We need to let go of unforgiveness towards others for the wounds of sin that have been inflicted upon us.

1. As Jesus has forgiven us, we need to forgive others. (Matthew 6:14-15, Colossians 3:13)
 - a. When we know that we have truly been forgiven by Christ, we then need to turn around and extend forgiveness to others. We have received unwarranted mercy and grace from God, and now we need to extend the same unwarranted and mercy and grace to others. If Christ has done so much for us, how can we not turn around and give to others the same way?

2. The forgiveness of others is necessary for our healing.
 - a. It can be especially difficult to forgive others who have abused us as children, when we are at the most vulnerable stage of life. It also can be very difficult to forgive those who have abused us at any age when it comes to sexual, physical, or emotional/verbal abuse.

When sexually abused it can be extremely hard to forgive. We have given (by force or manipulation) something very intimate of ourselves to another person. Great vulnerability has been exposed, out of which can grow a very intense wound, even physical scarring. Yet, no matter how great the wound and scars, we need to forgive those who have abused us if we are going to receive inner healing in our life. If we choose not to forgive, we allow the pain of the past to devastate and wound us in the present and in the future. But, when we forgive those who have hurt us, we find closure. In the choice to forgive, Christ can come in and heal our hearts once and for all!

III. Forgiveness and Inner Healing Through Forgiving God

- A. Many times individuals who have been wounded by others or by life circumstances blame God for what has happened to them. They may statements like “If God is so loving why did He allow this?” “If God is in control why did He allow this?” The false concept is that God is at fault when sin occurs. The false concept is that bad should not happen to children in the sense that God should protect them from all evil.
 1. It rains on the just and unjust. (John 5:43-45) In other words the consequences of living in a fallen world affects all individuals, young or old. Even Christians are not protected from all evil. The good news is that God can make ALL things work out for good. Even the evil done to us. (Rom 8:28)
 2. It needs to be understood that even though God is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, that Satan is the prince of the air and god of this world. (2 Cor 4:3-4) Satan has limited control in this world but God gives people free will and they can choose to be used by the devil to do evil upon others. This place we are living on is earth, not heaven yet.
- B. It needs to be understood that in the end God will make all things right. There will be a day of reckoning. God is a just God even if it seems in the midst of pain He does not care.
 1. There will be strong punishment who do harmful things to children. The person may appear to have gotten away with it, but God is just and issue His judgment. (Luke 17:2)

2. Vengeance is mine says the Lord. (Romans 12:19)

- C. God is on our side. It is His desire to protect us from evil. However, more importantly than protecting us from evil, God desires to bring healing to us when evil has come our way. It is His desire that we lean upon Him when wounding comes and see His glory in the midst of tragedy. It is His desire for us to not only hear about Him but see Him. (Job 42:5) Sometime it takes painful events to bring us to that point. However, it will happen if we let go of any grudges against a holy, righteous God.
- D. If we want to see healing in our life we must make the choice to forgive a God who does not need forgiven. We need to confess our bitterness and resentment towards God and ask for His forgiveness.

IV. Forgiveness and Inner Healing Through Forgiving Ourselves

- A. What God does not hold against us, we need to not hold against ourselves. (Hebrews 10:17). We may be dealing with true guilt because of how we have handled abuse to us in an unhealthy manner. If we have confessed our sin and repented of it, we need to receive God's forgiveness.

Sadly, many times those who have been abused, especially sexually abused, the devil tries to make the victim feel like they are the guilty party. The victim is absolutely never the guilty party-never. If a person believes they are in some way guilty, they need to understand they are not and they need to forgive themselves-stop punishing themselves when they have not done anything wrong to deserve the abuse. Nobody ever deserves abuse-nobody.

1. If God is not thinking about it, we don't need to. We need to let the guilt go.
2. We need to believe more in the power of Christ's forgiveness than on the power of sin. Focus on forgiveness and freedom!

- B. When we have been forgiven, sin is no longer ours to claim or hold on to. Make a choice to let it go. (Isaiah 52:1-2, Romans 5:1)

Bible Verses on Forgiveness

Forgiveness through Jesus Christ

John 8:36

If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.

Romans 5:20-21

20 And the Law came in that the transgression might increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,
21 that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:14

For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.

Romans 8:1

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Psalms 103:8-12

8 The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness.
9 He will not always strive *with us*; Nor will He keep *His anger* forever.
10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him.
12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore if any man is in Christ, *he is* a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Forgiving Others

Matthew 6:14-15

14 "For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.
15 "But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

Colossians 3:13

13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

Forgiving Ourselves

Hebrews 10:17

17 "AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."

Forgiving Ourselves

Isaiah 52:1-2

1 Awake, awake, Clothe yourself in your strength, O Zion; Clothe yourself in your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city. For the uncircumcised and the unclean will no more come into you.

2 Shake yourself from the dust, rise up, O captive Jerusalem; Loose yourself from the chains around your neck, O captive daughter of Zion.

Romans 5:1

Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

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Homework

1. The key to our freedom and complete healing is _____.
2. There is the potential for forgiveness through _____, by His atoning work on the _____.
2. We need to forgive _____, _____, and ourselves.
3. We need to forgive _____ if we want to receive the forgiveness of _____.
4. No matter how great the wound, how deep, or how severe, we need to _____ those who have hurt us.
5. If we choose to not forgive. We allow the pain of the past to _____ and _____ us in the present, and future.
6. When we are able to forgive by God's power, we can find _____, instead of continuously living in pain and being stuck in the past.
7. Many times individuals who have been wounded by others or by life circumstances blame _____ for what has happened to them.
8. It needs to be understood that in the _____ God will make all things _____.
9. If we have _____ our sin and _____ of it, we need to receive God's _____.