

FIVE



THE HEALING POWER OF
CONFESSION AND
FORGIVENESS



THE DOORWAY TO FORGIVENESS

Consider what you think about Forgiveness:

True or False?

- I can forgive if the person in the wrong is sorry.
- Forgiveness will set me free to move on with my life.
- Forgiveness will keep me from becoming like the person who hurt me.
- Forgiveness will open further my relationship with God.
- Forgiveness will keep me from becoming bitter.
- Scripture commands us to be forgiving.
- It's impossible to forgive certain things.
- It's impossible for God to forgive certain things.
- Forgiveness refuses to let the person who hurt me have any power over my life.
- Unforgiveness doesn't hurt the perpetrator at all; it hurts only me.
- When we forgive, it is only with God's help ... over and over.
- Forgiveness is a decision; it's not a feeling.
- There is a difference between remembering a transgression and lacking forgiveness.
- It is good to have something "concrete" to help you remember the day you set your offender free.

To forgive is to set a
prisoner free and
discover that the
prisoner was you.

Lewis B. Smedes

meetville.com

Examen = review of the day: "The review of the day is an opportunity for us to go back over our day with God—to do it in conversation with God"

Do you have a pattern of "examen" or confession?

We all agreed that **forgiveness** is a beautiful idea until we have to practice it. *CS Lewis.*

Human power alone is insufficient to reach full forgiveness. There is an element of forgiveness that is divine. It cannot be reached without God. *Frank Minirth*

When you don't forgive someone, in some way that person is in jail, and you are the warden. You're incarcerated, too, because you have to make sure the prisoner stays there. *Kerney Franston*

When we forgive, we forgive with help over and over. These are the questions: Who has wronged you? What would it look like to be a forgiver? **Because how badly do you want to be free?** *Shauna Niequist*

Forgiving does not erase the bitter past. A healed memory is not a deleted memory. Instead, forgiving what we cannot forget creates a new way to remember. We change the memory of our past into a hope for our future.
— Lewis B. Smedes

To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.
— Lewis B. Smedes, *Forgive and Forget*

Forgiving does not erase the bitter past. A healed memory is not a deleted memory. Instead, forgiving what we cannot forget creates a new way to remember. We change the memory of our past into a hope for our future.
— Lewis B. Smedes

You will know that forgiveness has begun when you recall those who hurt you and feel the power to wish them well.”
— Lewis B. Smedes

When we forgive evil we do not excuse it, we do not tolerate it, we do not smother it. We look the evil full in the face, call it what it is, let its horror shock and stun and enrage us, and only then do we forgive it.”
— Lewis B. Smedes

Circle the 2 quotes at the left that you most resonate with.

WELCOME
GOD
INTO
PAIN

THINK.
REFLECT.

It's important to recognize the difference between reconciliation and forgiveness. What is it?

STUDY PSALM 139

1) vv. 1-12: Awakening to the presence of God. "There is no place we can go where we can fall out of the presence of God."

Which of these 3 sections do you need to focus on right now? ___1 ___2 ___3

2) vv. 13-18: Celebrating your created goodness.

Ask God to show you places where you are growing and changing. Celebrate :)

3) vv. 19-24: Inviting God to search your heart.

Ask God to show you places where you fell short of Christlikeness and specifically if you need to address any unforgiveness:

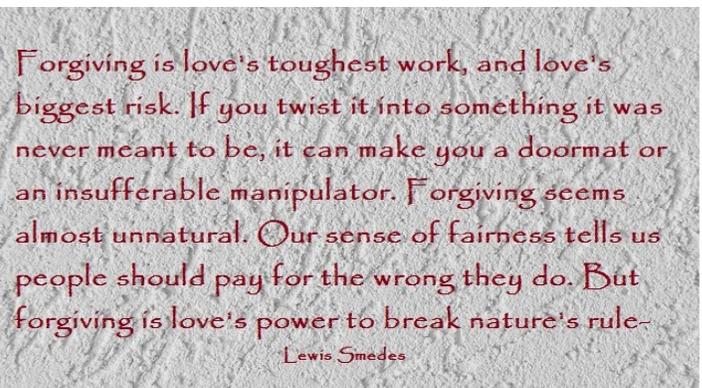
Search me, O God, and know my heart!
Try me and know my thoughts!
And see if there be any grievous way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting!

- *What are some reasons people don't want to forgive? (means that wrongs are acceptable, might seem to diminish pain etc.)*

- *What is preventing you right now from forgiving?*

DISCUSSION

- *Do you see a pattern of how you respond when people offend you? Does that response help or hurt you?*



What Forgiveness is and What it is Not

- Does NOT mean that any wrongs done to you were acceptable or condoned.
- Does NOT diminish the evil done against you, nor is it a denial of what happened.
- Does NOT necessarily mean forgetting ... it means remembering without the pain.
- IS a key part of not letting those wrongs hurt you any longer.
- Does NOT take away the consequences the other person will face because of his sin.
- Is NOT weakness; it is the most powerful thing you can do; refusing to forgive allows Satan to continue to hurt you; forgiveness stops the destructive power of Satan in one's life.
- IS an act of obedience; God knows it will bring you freedom.
- Is NOT something you do for someone else. It is something that you do for yourself.
- Is NOT reconciliation; it takes two to reconcile but only one to forgive.
- Does NOT depend on the other person's actions and it is probationary (for ex. saying, "I will forgive you as long as you aren't drinking")
- IS a gift you give to the offender; trust on the other hand, must be earned! You must set boundaries.
- Does NOT wait for the offender to repent; unlike God, who provides forgiveness when we repent, humans cannot demand repentance before granting forgiveness IS about how much you trust God to take care of you.
- IS experiencing empathy for the offender, humility about your own sinfulness, and gratitude for being forgiven by God and others.
- Does NOT seek revenge. Revenge never gets what it wants; it never evens the score. Vengeance is personal satisfaction, justice is moral accounting.
- IS letting go of your desire to hurt the other person; simply put, forgiveness means you "cancel a debt".
- IS a difficult and uncomfortable process; when you make a decision to forgive, God provides the grace and strength to forgive and to maintain a heart of forgiveness.
- Does NOT require you to become a "doormat" not does it require you to allow the offender to hurt you again. You can forgive someone almost anything, but you should not tolerate everything.
- Human forgiveness does NOT do away with human justice.

Compiled by Louan Hietbrink

WORTH THE SEARCH

<http://youtu.be/3cfp51vLZb4> "How to Forgive" by Corrie Ten Boom

Prayer Toolbox:

Forgiveness/ Prayer of Forgiveness

MORE

[Forgiving and Reconciling](#) - E. Worthington Jr.

[Art of Forgiving](#) - Smedes

[The Supernatural Power of Forgiveness](#)

Kris & Jason Vallotton

[Bait of Satan](#)—Bevere

Total Forgiveness—Kendall

PRAYER OF FORGIVENESS—Ministry

Part I: Hold up to the Lord all the things *about the person* that trouble you.

Put your hands together and pile up all the things *about the person* that trouble you . List and name those things that upset you about this person. Verbally state each thing as you are placing them in your hands. When you are finished, turn your hands over and release all of these things to the Lord.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, I give you each one of these things and ask that you take them and pour your love and healing power through them. I thank you, Lord, that You have the power and the grace to redeem them. I ask you, Lord Jesus, to lift all the pain and hurt that has been involved with each one of these things, that You lift it from my heart, mind, and spirit. I ask that You lift the burden of these things from my shoulders. I give all this to You, Lord, and I trust You to deal with them. Thank you, Lord, for taking each one of these things. Amen.

Part II: Hold up to the Lord all the things *about you* that trouble this person.

Put your hands together and pile up all the things *about you* that trouble the person you seek to forgive. Name these things and pile them up, one by one, in your hands. When you can't think of anything else, turn your hands over and release these things to the Lord.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, I ask you to pour your love and healing power over these things. I ask You to take them, and I thank You for taking them, dealing with them, and releasing this burden from (name). I trust You to heal this hurt and pain. Amen.

Part III: Hold up to the Lord your heart's desire *for this person*.

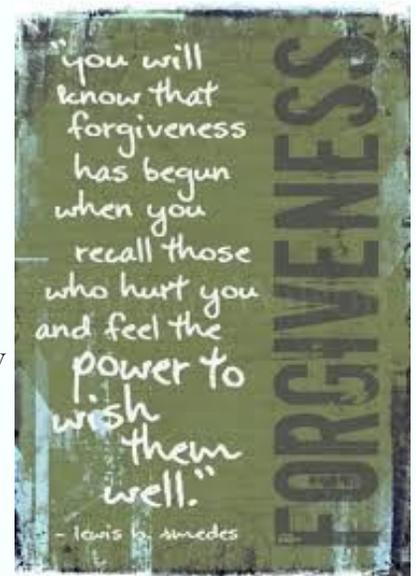
Tell the Lord what you would like Him to do in this person's life. (If the person has died, it's still okay to lift up the person and share with the Lord what the desire of your heart is for him.) Name those things and place them in your hands. When you are finished, turn your hands over and give them all to the Lord, just as before.

PRAYER: Lord, I give (name) to you. I thank You that You are able to handle (name) better than anyone else. Bring about your perfect will for (name) and let Your love and healing power flow into him/her. I release (name) into your care. Bless (name). Amen.

Part IV: Hold up to the Lord your hearts' desire *for yourself*.

Tell the Lord what you would like Him to do in your life. Give Him the desires of your heart and ask specifically for what you need from Him today. Name a fruit/s of the spirit that you especially need (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control).

PRAYER: Lord, I give myself to You and trust You. I need Your love, mercy and grace. From Your character, I need (fruit/s of the Spirit). Would You show me Your love for me and what You want to do in my life. Amen.



HELP ME TO FORGIVE

A crafted prayer for those wanting to forgive:

Bitterness is like
drinking poison and
waiting for the other
person to die.

Dear Heavenly Father,

I come to you and ask for your help. I know that I am to forgive others as you have forgiven me, but I find it so hard to do Lord. My mind and heart are full of anger for the things that have been said and done. At times it seems as though the ones that inflict pain and wounds are unrepentant...that they escape judgment. I am angry for what they have taken from me and for the pain they have caused me.

Lord, please help me to see with your eyes. Help me to remember that forgiveness is for me and not for them. Help me to remember that my forgiveness does not depend on them apologizing or repenting...help me to remember that forgiveness is between me and you. Lord, I am releasing my pain and my hurt and my anger to you and I am asking for your help in forgiving them so I can be set free.

I want to forgive and leave this heavy weight at your feet so I can be set free. Lord, their sin and their wrong doing, I leave in your hands for You to deal with it. I no longer want to be held hostage in a prison of anger and bitterness and sadness for what has been done by someone else. I no longer want to serve the sentence for what someone else has done wrong.

Lord, release me from this bondage and free my heart. I want to forgive Lord, as you have forgiven me. You died not only to set me free from my sins, but to set me free from all the things that hold me hostage and keep me from being who you want me to be. Help me to live in the peace and freedom that you offer.

Lord, from this day forward, I want to be healed from all these negative feelings. Thank you Lord, for helping me...what I can't do...what I don't have the strength to do on my own power, I know I am able to do through Jesus.

Thank you Lord. for helping me to move forward today. Help my mind turn to you when the old feelings and thoughts start to enter my mind. Bind the enemy so he can't bring up the past. Clean the wound out of my heart Lord so it can finally heal and so it can be at peace. Thank you Lord. In the name of Jesus I ask all of these things. Amen

Tim Clinton uses REACH as a path to forgiveness:

- R—Recall the Hurt (Review the truth of what has happened, not to blame but to acknowledge truth)
- E—Empathize with the Person (Sometimes we glimpse why the person did what they did if we can place ourselves in other shoes)
- A — Altruistic Gift of Forgiveness (Recall the mercy and grace you have from God & give that away)
- C —Commit to Forgive Publicly (Go forward without ruminating on the wrongs. Remember decision)
- H —Hold on to Forgiveness (It is good to have something “concrete” to remember the day you set your offender free. It is not possible to forget—but we can remember with less pain).