

Reconciliation

"Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. "

Matthew 6:12

We are to forgive one another as Christ forgave us (Eph. 4:32, Col. 3:13). This means that we are to extend mercy to those who have violated us to some degree in our relational contact with them. To withhold this forgiveness frustrates the flow of God's mercy toward us. (Lk. 11:4, Mk. 11:25, Mt. 5:23-24). When unforgiveness is found in one's heart, it must be dealt with ruthlessly, even when it is somewhat justified. So what sort of a process should we take someone through?

I. Recognize the Problem of Unforgiveness

A. It's Scriptural

1. Matthew 5:23-24

But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell." Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. (NIV)

"This is how I want you to conduct yourself in these matters. If you enter your place of worship and, about to make an offering, you suddenly remember a grudge a friend has against you, abandon your offering, leave immediately, go to this friend and make things right. Then and only then, come back and work things out with God." (The Message)

2. Mark 11:25

"And when you assume the posture of prayer, remember that it's not all asking. If you have anything against someone, forgive--only then will your heavenly Father be inclined to also wipe your slate clean of sins." (The Message)

3. Personal Responsibility

A person must take responsibility for his part in the incident. Usually there are two sides to every problem. At the very least, one must acknowledge the heart attitude of unforgiveness to himself and to God.

II. Ask God for Forgiveness

A. Prayer

- 1. Have them state their desire to be healed of this attitude and ask God to give them clear guidance as to how to bring healing in the relationship and in their heart.*

III. Reconciliation

A. Matt. 5:24

- 1. They need to take appropriate steps toward reconciliation with that person. It is important to do the work of repentance in order to bring healing to the relationship and to the attitudes of one's heart.*

B. It is a process

- 1. It is important to remember that forgiveness is a process and often takes time and energy in its practical outworkings.*

IV. Follow up

A. Be Gentle but Firm

Proper care is needed at this time. Instruct them to:

- 1. Talk to themselves about the truth and not to listen to past tapes of the enemy*
- 2. Don't let your mind rehearse the offense or engage in imaginary get even conversations*
- 3. Don't dwell on the negative consequences or situation*
- 4. Trust the Lord to work on the other side of the relationship and concentrate on your part.*
- 5. Review God's promises*
- 6. Worship and intimate relationship with the Father*
- 7. Speak in tongues and sing in the Spirit.*
- 8. Remember that growth, health, forgiveness and recovery are a process.*