

FORGIVENESS

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. UNFORGIVENESS IS A PROBLEM.
- B. MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW HOW TO FORGIVE
- C. YOU MUST _____ FORGIVENESS FOR YOUR SIN.
- D. YOU MUST LEARN HOW TO FORGIVE _____.

II. FOUNDATIONAL SCRIPTURES

- A. *Hebrews 12:15* “Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled.”
 - 1. **Carefully:** “constant and hardworking.”
 - 2. **Springing Up:** “to move suddenly, to appear quickly.”
 - 3. **Defiled:** “polluted and corrupted.”
 - 4. You can cut down a tree, but the buried roots can still be “alive and well.”
- B. *Ephesians 3:17-19* “So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”
 - 1. When we are born again we receive a “root” of God’s _____.
 - 2. We also have many other roots:
 - Rejection, Bitterness, Anger, Fear, Hatred, Confusion, Depression
 - 3. God wants all ungodly roots _____, so we can be filled with “all the fullness of God.”

III. BASICS

- A. Without forgiveness it is hard to maintain healthy relationships in _____, friendships, at church or work.
- B. Our spiritual life begins with receiving Christ’s forgiveness.
- C. Our spiritual life is _____ through forgiveness.
I John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
- D. We first learn to forgive by _____ Christ’s forgiveness. If you still feel guilty and burdened in an area then you haven’t received Christ’s forgiveness.

- E. Example: An Inheritance
- F. Bitterness is cancer of the soul. It affects the mind, will and _____.
- G. Physically, _____ affects the body.
- H. Example: glass of water
- I. Spiritually, _____ affects the soul.
- J. A person who is full of bitterness is like a person whose _____ (“love tank”) has been shot full of holes.
- K. The only love many people receive is at church. Are you a life-giver?

IV. WHERE DOES BITTERNESS COME FROM?

- A. UNMET NEEDS IN CHILDHOOD
 1. Children need love and _____ . These are basic needs.
 2. Love must be communicated.
 3. A negative Self-Image plus a negative _____ equals Self-Rejection.
- B. UNMET NEEDS IN MARRIAGE
 1. Spouse insensitive to your _____ .
 2. Doesn’t understand you.
 3. You become resentful.
 4. Can lead to bitterness.
 5. Manifests in _____ .
 - a. Silent treatment
 - b. Yelling, arguing, nagging, screaming
 - c. “Headache”
 - d. Talk, but not talk
 - e. Never let you forget your mistakes
 - f. “You are just like your mother”
- C. HURTS IN RELATIONSHIPS (WORK, NEIGHBORHOOD, CHURCH)
 1. Hurts held on to lead to _____ .
 2. The closest relationships bring the deepest hurts.
 3. If you’re the innocent party, the bitterness becomes deeper; then self _____ comes in and joins with bitterness. “I have a right to be mad.”
 4. If you’re wrong, then you get mad at yourself and hate yourself.

D. ADVERSITIES

1. Problems In Life
 - Troubles, Death, Illnesses, Molestation, Adoption, Accidents, Divorce, Loss of Job, Alcoholic Parents, Abusive Parents, etc.
2. Things don't work out as ____ _____.
3. Things happen that I don't expect.
4. Biblical Example
 - a. The story of Naomi
 - b. Naomi's name means "pleasant." When her husband and two boys died she said, "*Call me Mara, (which means bitter) for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.*" *Ruth 1:20*
 - c. When we hurt we need to find someone to blame; it's usually _____. We cut ourselves off from the source of comfort.
 - d. If we reach out in our pain and sorrow, He will comfort us.
 - e. *II Corinthians 12:9 "And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."*
 - f. If we hold on to our pain and sorrow, it goes _____ and we become bitter.

V. RESULTS OF BITTERNESS

A. POLLUTION OF YOUR _____ SYSTEM

1. It's like turning sewage into a reservoir.
2. Bitterness affects your actions, health, attitude and _____.
3. Hatred is like acid, it destroys the vessel that holds it.
4. *Hebrews 12:15* Bitterness pollutes you and _____.
 - Mad at husband - - - jump all over kids.
 - Mad at boyfriend - - - jump all over parents.

B. BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS IN FAMILY & FRIENDS

- Causes Distrust, Division, Suspicion

C. BITTERNESS BUILDS A HOUSE

1. Builds _____ between you and others.
2. Builds a ceiling between you and _____.
3. Sin Separates - - - Unconfessed Sin!
Isaiah 59:1-2 Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear."

- Remember sin has pleasure, but only for a season.
Hebrews 11:25 "Choosing rather to share ill treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

VI. FORGIVENESS - THE ANSWER TO BITTERNESS

A. *Matthew 6:14-15 "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."*

- Forgiveness releases God's forgiveness to _____.
- Release the one who hurt you and God will _____ you from the hurt.
- Example: poke your hand with your finger.

B. HOW MANY TIMES DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY TO FORGIVE?

- Matthew 18:21-22* Seventy times seven, 490 times?
- Matthew 18:23-35* Jesus is saying _____ keeping records. I forgave all you owed. Can't you forgive?

C. HOW DOES SATAN GET AN ADVANTAGE OVER A CHRISTIAN?

- II Corinthians 2:10-11 "Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive... lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices."*
- The scripture tells us that Satan gets the advantage through unforgiveness.
- Advantage is a wrestling term. The one with the advantage position starts the match on the _____.
- What if they don't forgive me? Obey God's Word and forgive them!
- Why does God require us to forgive? He _____ that bitterness will destroy us.
- Example: Susie - - potty trained, goes to school, gets married, first dinner party.

D. IF I FORGIVE:

- Does that mean the other person is _____? No!!
- Does that mean that I have to let them back in my life? No!!

VII. STEPS TO FORGIVENESS: "HOW TO"

A. **STEP ONE: CHOOSE TO FORGIVE THE PERSON**

1. Forgiveness is an act of your _____. "I will obey God's Word and forgive."
2. It is not a feeling or emotion. Don't _____ for lovey dovey feelings.
3. Name the person and the hurt. Example: "I choose to forgive my (Mother) for (rejecting me)."
4. Don't Pray: "**God** forgive my mother." God has no problem forgiving. I have the problem, I must forgive.
5. Three teachings about how to forgive
 - * **Name everything**
You must forgive everything and name everything that the person ever did.
 - * **Blanket prayer**
You can just pray a "blanket" prayer and forgive them for everything all at once. "I forgive my mother for everything she ever did to hurt me."
 - * **Holy Spirit Directed PrayerThis Works!**
Ask the Holy Spirit, the Teacher to show you what individual things you need to forgive each person for. Example: Pick-Up Sticks.
6. Be sure to include forgiving them for the **long term effects** on your life and if applicable, the long term effects on your spouse and children.

B. **STEP TWO: ASK GOD TO FORGIVE YOU FOR YOUR _____**

1. Lord Forgive Me For My: **ANGER**
HATRED
BITTERNESS
REVENGE
MURDER IN MY HEART
2. *1 John 1:9 "If I confess MY sin....." REPENTANCE*
3. *Ephesians 4:31-32 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

C. **STEP THREE: _____ FOR THE PERSON**

1. Whenever the person comes to mind, pray for them until God replaces the bitterness and hatred with His Love.

2. *1 John 2:9-11 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.*

3. *1 Peter 3:9 “Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.”*

D. REMEMBER, FOR FORGIVENESS TO BE _____ YOU MUST:

1. Forgive the person.
2. Ask God to forgive you for the sin in your heart (your reaction).
3. Pray for the person.

VIII. WHO DO I NEED TO FORGIVE?

A. FORGIVE _____:

Mother, father, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, your children, grandchildren husband, ex-husband, wife, ex-wife, grandparents, in-laws, cousins, boyfriends, girlfriends, childhood friends, teenage friends, teachers, neighbors, adoptive parents, pastors, leaders, Sunday School teachers, etc.

1. **DO I NEED TO GO TO EACH PERSON AND TELL ALL? NO! NOT UNLESS YOU ARE DIRECTED TO BY HOLY SPIRIT. If He says yes, ask Him when and what to say. Remember to be a life-giver.**

Example: Joseph and his brothers.

2. Do I need to forgive those who are dead? Yes!

B. RECEIVE FORGIVENESS FOR _____.

Because Christ Has Forgiven Me, I **RECEIVE** His Forgiveness Myself For:

(Examples)

1. Making wrong choices and decisions that hurt others and me.
2. Not doing God's will when I knew it.
3. Hating and hurting my parents.
4. Lying to myself and pretending.
5. Stealing as a child, stealing as an adult.
6. Sexual promiscuity.
7. Getting high, getting drunk.
8. Not being a good daughter, wife, and/or mother.
9. Not being a good son, husband, and/or father.
10. Playing doctor, nurse as a child.
11. Homosexual acts as a child, as an adult.
12. Being raped (If I feel like I was in any way at fault, dressed sexy, drinking or doing drugs etc.)

13. Taking advantage of others sexually. (Even in marriage.)
14. Being molested, or being a molester.
15. Hating sex.
16. Having an abortion.

C. ASK THE LORD TO FORGIVE YOU FOR BEING ANGRY AT HIM FOR:

1. Not liking the way you were made.
2. Making you a girl/boy.
3. Giving you big ears, eyes, hips. (you fill in the blank)
4. Making sex.
5. Allowing _____ to happen to you. (you fill in the blank)

D. WHO DO YOU NEED TO FORGIVE IN THE _____ ?

(Examples)

1. The person who puts their pocketbook on the seat just as you were getting ready to sit down.
2. The group of people who are talking after church and stop talking when you walk by . . . “were they talking about me?”
3. The pastor who walks by and says “Hi” to everyone except you.
4. The pastor who picked the new kid to be deacon/deaconess when your husband/wife had been serving faithfully in the church for two years.
5. The pastor who didn’t care enough to **know** that you were hurting.
6. The ones that “caused” the church split.
7. The ones who accused you of causing a church split.
8. The ones who left during a church split.
9. The one who always know/knew everyone’s business and talks/talked about it.
10. The person who was your pastor/elder (you looked up to and respected him/her) and you later found out that what they taught wasn’t the truth.
11. The pastor who used you to serve, but when someone else came along, you were out of the picture - out of sight, out of mind.
12. The pastor who didn’t or wouldn’t use you – allow you to serve.
13. The Christian who you were involved with sexually.
14. The leader who fell into immorality.

E. DON’T BE INTROSPECTIVE

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal what He wants you to forgive, but don’t get out of _____ always looking inward.
2. Get rid of bitterness once and for all. **The past.**

3. Learn to walk in forgiveness each day. **The present.** In His forgiveness of us, and our forgiveness of each other.
4. FORGIVE SO THAT TODAY'S _____ DON'T BECOME TOMORROW'S ROOTS!
I John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to "Teach you all things."
John 14:26 "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, who the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."
6. Ask the Holy Spirit to "Guide you into all truth."
John 16:13 "But when He, the Spirit of Truth comes, He will guide you into all truth."
7. Freedom!
John 8:32 "And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

IX. FORGIVENESS MEANS:

- A. TO CEASE TO _____ RESENTMENT AGAINST SOMEONE.
- B. TO _____ UP RESENTMENT.
- C. TO GRANT RELIEF FROM PAYMENT OF A DEBT.

X. FORGET MEANS:

- A. I WON'T RAISE THESE MATTERS AGAINST YOU AGAIN AND USE THEM AS A WEAPON.
- B. I WON'T TELL _____ ABOUT THEM AGAIN, UNLESS DIRECTED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR GOD'S GLORY.
- C. I WON'T DWELL ON THEM IN MY OWN MIND. THIS DOESN'T MEAN I WILL NEVER THINK ABOUT THE SUBJECT AGAIN.
- D. WHAT DOES "FORGETTING THE PAST" MEAN?
 1. *Philippians 3:13 "Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining to what is ahead, I press on toward the goal...."*
- E. WHAT IS PAUL FORGETTING?
 1. Hurts and rejections? _____.
 2. His past aristocratic heritage and his elite education? _____!

3. *Philippians 3:4-6 “If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless.”*

F. YOU KNOW YOU ARE HEALED IN AN AREA WHEN YOU REMEMBER THE EVENT, BUT IT NO LONGER DESTROYS YOU MENTALLY, EMOTIONALLY OR SPIRITUALLY.

AFTER THE SEMINAR:

1. **This seminar can be like spiritual open-heart surgery. This is a time to focus on walking through the forgiving, healing process. Baby yourself! Don't decide to paint the house, clean the garage or attic, invite the family over for a long weekend, etc.**
2. **Be patient with yourself as you are changing. Don't get discouraged if you suddenly see SIN in your heart.**
3. **Watch for attacks from the enemy – he hates it when he knows you are being set free!**
4. **Follow up is very important. You must take the time to forgive, to repent for the sin in your heart and to walk through to wholeness. Just attending the seminar does not mean that you have gone through the Roots Seminar and now you're “FINE!”**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

(Please do not mention the names of any persons or churches)

Read question #1

Each person answer question #1

Read next question and each person answer it.

No counseling – this is a time to share and listen!

Let people cry if they need to. This is a safe place for God's tears.

QUESTIONS

1. SHARE A “ROOT OF BITTERNESS” YOU RECEIVED FROM YOUR CHILDHOOD.
2. SHARE A “ROOT OF BITTERNESS” YOU RECEIVED DURING YOUR TEENAGE YEARS.
3. SHARE A “ROOT OF BITTERNESS” YOU RECEIVED AS AN ADULT.
4. SHARE A “ROOT OF BITTERNESS” YOU RECEIVED FROM YOUR SPOUSE.
5. SHARE A “ROOT OF BITTERNESS” YOU RECEIVED FROM PROBLEMS IN LIFE.

Examples:

TROUBLES
DEATH
ILLNESS
MOLESTATION
ADOPTION

ACCIDENTS
DIVORCE
LOSS OF JOB
ALCOHOLIC PARENTS
ABUSIVE PARENTS

6. ARE THERE ANY BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS IN YOUR FAMILY?
7. WHAT HAS CHRIST FORGIVEN YOU FOR THAT YOU ARE STILL HOLDING AGAINST YOURSELF?

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