

## HOW TO LOVE

### You Can Forgive

#### I. You have to believe you can forgive

- A. One of the first questions you have to answer when it comes to forgiveness is, "Can you Forgive?"
  - 1. Many people genuinely believe they can't forgive this person for that or that person for this
  - 2. When you go to live the forgiving life you're going to run into this feeling of, " I can't do it, I can't forgive"
  - 3. The reality is that feeling of, "I can't do it," is more your flesh not wanting to let it go
    - a. See when you live with offense and unforgiveness for so long your flesh begins to depend upon the nourishment of those things for it's survival and just like a drug addict feels like he can't let go of the drugs (because he want survive) your flesh feels like it can't let go of the unforgiveness because it won't survive – GOOD! Your flesh isn't supposed to survive, it's supposed to be crucified!
- B. Ephesians 4:32-Here you have a command, a charge to forgive (Luke 6:37, Colossians 3:13)
  - 1. God didn't ask you to try and to do your best; He told you to FORGIVE
    - a. *I'll try* is not the right response; The right response is *I will do it*
    - b. The reason God didn't tell you to "try" to do anything is because that would insinuate He's not sure if you can do it
    - c. If God told you to do something, He's sure you can do it because He's going to give you the ability to do it
  - 2. If God told you to do it, then you can do it – So yes you can forgive
    - a. If God would tell you to do something and not give you the ability to do it that would make him unjust and he is not
  - 3. Not only did God tell you to forgive He told you to forgive EVEN AS or the same way He forgave you
    - a. If God wants you to forgive like him then that means He's going to give you the same ability He has with which to do it
  - 4. **Not only can you forgive, but you can forgive just like God forgives-Ephesians 4:32-5:1**
    - a. That means that you can be a forgiving person, a person who forgives just like He's a forgiving God, a God who forgives
    - b. That means you can forgive people of the faults, put their "sin" out of sight and not hold onto it; you can pass over stuff
    - c. That means forgiveness belongs to you
    - d. That means you can forgive anything and everything

- e. That means you can be a big time forgiver and lavish forgiveness on people
- f. That means that you can forgive instantly, you can forgive quickly
- g. That means you can be ready to forgive, plenteous in mercy
- h. That means you can get great pleasure in forgiving people and delight in doing it
- 5. Romans 5:5-God shed His love abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost and therefore you can forgive anybody of anything the same way he can because he gave you His ability to do it
  - a. Because God has shed his love abroad in your heart the same ability He has to forgive is in you right now
- C. You can go forgive whomever you choose to forgive for whatever they have done
  - 1. You got to forgive freely; You give it to people who don't ask for it, you give it to people who don't "deserve" it

## II. You got to be ready to forgive

- A. Psalm 86:5-If God's ready to forgive, that means He got ready
  - 1. Why would God get ready to forgive? Because he knows an opportunity to forgive is coming
  - 2. The only way you're going to be ready to forgive is if you get ready
    - a. Why would you get ready to forgive? Because you know an opportunity to forgive is coming
    - b. Luke 17:1-Offences are coming; The opportunity to be offended is coming and it's impossible for it not to come
  - 3. You're going to have opportunities to take offense everyday and you got to make sure you ready to forgive because if you're not ready to forgive you probably won't forgive
    - a. When something happens you don't want to be caught off guard, but rather you want to be able to say I've already decided I am a forgiver, I will forgive, I do forgive
- B. You have to make that decision: *I am a forgiver, I will forgive, I do forgive*
  - 1. You have to exercise your will by faith in God before you every get into a situation to forgive: I am a forgiver, I will forgive, I do forgive
    - a. Jeremiah 31:33-34-God's making a decision to forgive before He has the opportunity to forgive
    - b. To be ready to forgive means you've made the decision to be a forgiver and live a forgiving life long before you have the opportunity to exercise forgiveness
  - 2. Psalm 112:7,8, 2 Corinthians 2:1-Fix your heart, establish your heart, determine it with yourself, settle it, "I AM A FORGIVER, I WILL FORGIVE, I DO FORGIVE."

## III. How to develop in forgiveness and how to be ready to forgive

- A. \*We've gotten so far away from even thinking that forgiveness is relevant in our daily lives that we have become very underdeveloped in it
  - 1. You will not develop in what you do not do and because we haven't been practicing forgiveness we have been weak in it

- B. \*You say these words BY FAITH IN GOD, IN FAITH IN GOD and as you do you HAVE FAITH IN GOD that He is causing these words to become in your life, believing that God is developing this in me as I say these words
1. MY CONFESSION OF FAITH: *I am a forgiver, I will forgive, I choose to forgive. I do forgive, I give forgiveness. I am a forgiving person. Forgiveness belongs to me. I can forgive anybody of anything. I forgive greatly, I forgive generously, I lavish forgiveness on others and the supply of my forgiveness is inexhaustible. I am quick to forgive. I forgive instantly. I forgive freely. I am ready to forgive. I get great pleasure in forgiving people. I am abounding in mercy. I am strong in forgiveness. I am a forgiver.*
  2. That ability to forgive is already in there, but by saying this you allow that ability to be developed by God's spirit (It's like a bicep muscle, everybody has one, but some are more developed than others because people have exercised to develop it)
- C. \*I'm not developing myself, I'm speaking these words IN FAITH IN GOD that as I do He's developing me
1. Ephesians 3:16-It's the spirit of God strengthening my inner man with ability
    - a. You can't develop in spiritual things through self-effort; it takes faith effort and the Holy Ghost to develop
    - b. Philippians 2:13-God is working in me by his spirit both to will and to do his good pleasure and part of his good pleasure is forgiving
      - 1) He works in me to develop me in forgiveness, energizing and creating in me the power and desire to do it
  2. The Kingdom process is, I only say what my father tells me to say and then the spirit of God goes to work (EX: God said light be, Jesus said light be, the spirit of God moved and manifested it- Ephesians 3:9, Hebrews 1:2, Colossians 1:16)
    - a. John 14:10-It's the Father that dwells within He does the work and that means I'm not developing myself, but if I don't say what I'm told to say then I don't develop
  3. Every time I say it in faith the spirit of God does something in me; but if I don't say anything, the spirit don't work
    - a. If it's God that works in me both to will and to do of his good pleasure, then I know that God works with my words and my faith and if I'm not saying what He said and believing what he said then he doesn't have much to work with
    - b. If God's going to work in me, I have to give him something to work with by believing and speaking
  4. The first thing God does is He works in me to give me light about what He has said and then He works to get me to say what He said
    - a. You got to say what he says; if you don't say what He says you don't develop

- D. \*What this tells me is with the Word of God and me speaking those words in faith the Spirit of God can work in me and develop me to the place where I am strong in forgiveness, where I am highly developed in forgiveness, where I am a big time forgiver
  - 1. And in the beginning because you're so weak in forgiveness and underdeveloped in forgiveness actually forgiving can seem hard and even impossible, but through the Word of God, faith in God and speaking faith-filled words by the spirit of God you can become strong in forgiveness
- E. A big problem in this is you will never exercise to develop in an area where you don't see the need to develop
  - 1. Many people think, "Oh I don't need to develop in forgiveness, I'm not holding unforgiveness against anybody."
  - 2. That's why the first thing God does a lot of time is show you just how underdeveloped you are because if you don't first see the need to develop you'll never endeavor to develop
    - a. This is God exposing you, but on the humble will receive it; Pride hardens itself to the correction and says no to it

#### **IV. How do your forgive? – If you don't know how to forgive, then you don't know how to love**

- A. Forgiving follows the pattern of the kingdom; You believe and you speak words and that's how you forgive
  - 1. Romans 10:8-10-You got saved by believing and speaking words and this is how everything in the Kingdom works
  - 2. Matthew 18:35-Jesus gives us a window into forgiveness by telling us we need to forgive from our hearts
    - a. Matt12:35-Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks so if you forgive from the heart then you forgive with the mouth
    - b. The way you forgive is from your heart with your words
  - 3. Forgiveness has not taken place until you open your mouth and by faith in God declared I forgive
- B. How do you take offense? The same way with your heart and with your mouth
  - 1. John 6:61-Their murmuring demonstrated that they had taken offense; the words demonstrated their offense
    - a. One of the main ways offense manifests is in murmuring
    - b. When you're displeased, angry, indignant murmuring will follow and that's evidence that you've taken offense
    - c. Jesus knew they murmured and asked them if they were offended
  - 2. You take offense, something upset you and then you went and spoke the offense you took it
- C. Just because you forgive with your words doesn't mean the feelings of unforgiveness leave instantly; the symptoms and feelings of unforgiveness have to be resisted and fought off with faith filled words

1. Forgiveness doesn't take place because you feel differently, forgiveness takes place when you give it by faith by speaking words
2. The same way you'd have to fight off the feelings of fear you fight off feelings of unforgiveness
3. Just because you have feelings of unforgiveness doesn't mean you haven't forgiven
4. You continue in that stance and eventually those feelings and symptoms will subside

D. Every opportunity you have to take offense and hold unforgiveness needs to be actively dealt with through and by forgiving

1. 2 Cor 10:3-5-Every thought of offense and unforgiveness needs to be dealt with and the only way to deal with offense is forgiveness
2. Every time you had an opportunity to be offend, to have anything against anybody you either took offense or gave forgiveness and if you didn't give forgiveness you took offense
3. Pushing it aside and acting like it didn't bother you is not forgiving
4. Deal with it, admit it, it made you mad, it displeased you and then let it go; don't pretend like it didn't bother you because if you do you want deal with it the way you need to

**V. There is a big difference between giving forgiveness and trusting again; Forgiveness is instant and does not have to be earned while trust has to be earned and takes time**

A. God can forgive of something instantly, but that doesn't means he's going to trust you with the same responsibility right away

1. God can forgive you for being unfaithful in the least, but that doesn't mean he's going to trust you with much
2. To earn trust you have to deem yourself trustworthy; you don't have to earn forgiveness or be worthy of it

B. Letting someone remain in a position or be responsible for something that they've deemed themselves untrustworthy to have through wrong behavior is not mercy and forgiveness and love it's neglect

1. Mercy and love and forgiveness says there's nothing between you and me and I want to help get restored in anyway I can; it does not say you can remain in the same position and carry on with the same responsibilities even though you've demonstrated behavior and character that makes untrustworthy to have that position and those responsibilities
2. Mercy and forgiveness says while you're being restored you can't hold this position and it's to protect people and yourself
3. Letting the person stay in that position is not mercy, it's not love, it's not forgiveness it's neglect
4. Just because I make you step down and take away your position and responsibilities doesn't mean I'm throwing you out
  - a. I can forgive you and remove you from that place of authority, from that assignment