

Practice Forgiveness

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Martin Luther King, Jr., “Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a constant attitude.”

A definition of forgiveness:

Fred Luskin, “forgiveness is making peace with the word ‘no.’”

Forgiveness is accepting the fact that something bad happened to you and accepting the price for it

Forgiveness is a spiritual power: It is rooted in our spiritual life. It empowers our mind, emotions and will but starts in our soul. It is not a one-time event but a force that flows from God through us to others. (Matt. 6.14-15)

Forgiveness is a spiritual power that flows from God through us to others as we make peace with the word no.

Five Facts about forgiveness:

1 There are different kinds of forgiveness

- There are different types of offenses:

Minor wrongs – common slights and inconveniences. These are often easily forgotten. Still, they must be dealt with or they will harden our soul.

Provocative wrongs - the most dangerous of all. These wrongs provoke us to revenge, gossip, nurture hate and more. Everyone needs a process for dealing with these.

Major wrongs – these are the rare but devastating events that require forgiveness for our life to go on. Resources are available for these wrongs. Conversion with others is necessary.

2 Forgiveness is more about you than about your enemy

(Matt. 7.3-5)

Forgiveness is a spiritual power and so is unforgiveness, but it is a power for destruction. Very few provocative wrongs are one-sided. We must take responsibility for our part.

3 Forgiveness is not the same thing as forgetfulness

Forgiveness and consequences are not the same thing. So, when we forgive we accept the new reality, we make peace with the word No AND also put boundaries up so it doesn't happen again.

4 Forgiveness is hard work

Find or develop a process. Most include:

- Develop spiritual tools.
- Own the feelings. Grieve.
- Revise your picture of the other person.
- Tell somebody else

5 Forgive yourself

If you can't forgive yourself you have not fully experienced the powerful forgiveness of God.

- Start by being kind to yourself.
- Pursue God.