

Biblical Forgiveness

Preparing to Forgive

Introduction

- Forgiveness is not an accident. It is an intentional act.
- We must be careful to cultivate a heart of forgiveness for the day it is needed.

Steps to Preparing Your Heart

- Experience God's Forgiveness
 - You need to experience personally the beauty of forgiveness.
 - God's forgiveness is our model for forgiveness – Colossians 3:13
- Meditate on God's Forgiveness
 - God's forgiveness is more than changing our status from “unforgiven” to “forgiven”.
 - Consider the great price paid by Christ to enable God's forgiveness of our sins – Ephesians 1:7.
 - Seek better understanding of concepts like repentance, reconciliation, forgiveness, etc.
- Examine Your Heart
 - Lay your soul out before God and allow Him to reveal instances or areas you need to practice forgiveness – Psalm 139:23-24
 - Do not just trust your own judgement. You will deceive yourself and find ways to avoid forgiving others. – Jeremiah 17:9, Proverbs 12:15
- Pray for Help
 - Ask God to help you as you forgive – James 1:5
 - God works through the process of sanctification to mature us in our Christian walk.
- Choose to Forgive
 - Making the choice before it is necessary pushes you to forgive others by default.
 - Decide to reject bitterness, hatred, etc. – Ephesians 4:31
 - Make the decision in advance so that you will practice forgiveness. – Ephesians 4:32
- Seek to be a Blessing to Others
 - Strive to do what is right and holy – I Peter 2:12
 - Default to kindness – I Peter 4:8
- Forgive Quickly
 - Do not let bitterness have a chance to fester within your soul.
 - Do not give yourself time to reconsider or procrastinate

- Acknowledge God in Forgiveness
 - Remember that you are modeling His forgiveness – Colossians 3:13
 - Openly state God's role in guiding and empowering your forgiveness – Proverbs 3:5-6

God's Empowering Grace

- The testimony of Scripture is that God gives grace in our time of need – I Corinthians 10:13
- He can enable us to do what we usually cannot – II Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 4:13.