



Forgiving Forward Training

This material is borrowed from our friends Bruce and Toni Hebel from their book titled "Forgiving Forward"

Forgiving others is the vital response of those who have received the forgiveness of God. The blood of Jesus covers all sins, including the ones committed against us. Yet some of us walk in unforgiveness daily and have lived many years experiencing less than the abundant life.

"Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" is the prayer we voice from Matthew 6, yet we often choose unforgiveness and step out from under God's protection and expose ourselves to torment. We see this in Matthew 18 in the parable of the unmerciful servant. The servant had been forgiven a large debt, but when he couldn't forgive another's small debt, he was the one who was tormented.

Gal 5:1 says: "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free."

God calls us to walk in freedom, but He won't force freedom on us.

The Good News is, when we choose to forgive, God unleashes protection, glorious healing, and freedom. The spiritual atmosphere changes and everyone can reap the harvest.

In the book Forgiving Forward, Bruce and Toni Hebel share seven Forgiveness Protocols, based on scripture, which are available for use as a tool to specifically address the wounds of our past.



Consider whether unforgiveness is affecting your heart.

Read out loud Matthew 18:21-35:

21 Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?” 22 Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. 23 “Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.”

24 As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. 25 Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. 26 “At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ 27 The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

28 “But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. 29 “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’ 30 “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.



32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’

34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. 35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

Overview of Matthew 18:21-35

Matthew 18 speaks of a wealthy ruler who decided to settle accounts. One servant owed him 10,000 talents, roughly \$7.5 Billion in today’s dollars. Unable to pay, the man was forgiven his debt. Incredibly this forgiven man went and found someone who owed him money. The debt this time was 100 denarii, roughly \$17,000 in our current economy. Unable to pay his debt, the forgiven man refused to forgive and threw him into prison. When the news got back to the wealthy ruler, he was justifiably angered. He summoned the man and declared him to be a wicked slave. He said, “I canceled all your debt, should you have had mercy on your fellow slave?” In anger, he turned him over to be tortured until he should pay back all he owed.

After finishing this parable, Jesus then made a shocking statement in verse 35. “This is how my heavenly Father



will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

God does not torture us. He withholds His protection and gives the enemy authority to do the tormenting. Consequently, we do not experience the liberating effect of our salvation.

Remember, the blood of Jesus Christ covers ALL sin, including the ones committed against us! Jesus never let the offense determine whether He would forgive someone. Forgiveness is a choice, not a process; it doesn't have to take a long time, no matter what the offense.

THE 7 STEPS of the Forgiving Forward Protocol

We would like to outline for you “The Protocols of Forgiveness” from the book “Forgiving Forward” by Bruce and Toni Hebel.

It is most effective to walk through the 7 protocols of forgiveness “aloud,” and with someone you trust as a witness. Therefore, confess your sins one to another, and pray for each other so that you may be healed. James 5:16 (NASB)

1. Thank God for forgiving you.

When reflecting on how much God has forgiven us, we are all-the-more eager to forgive others. Pride says “I would never commit that sin.” Yet the truth remains that we are all



capable of sin at any level. We all mess up, but God loves us anyway. Praise puts everything in perspective and produces a humility that opens the door for Forgiveness.

2. Ask God, “Who do I need to forgive and for what?”
(NOTE: Only if the person and wound has NOT already been identified during the opening discussion)

If the Participant is unsure, use probing questions:
Is there one event in your life that seems to haunt you?
In your life, who has wounded you the greatest?
What has happened in your life that has brought you the most pain?

3. Repent of your sin of unforgiveness.

It is the sin that keeps people in torment. Unless you repent of this way of thinking, you will not be free. Until we recognize that unforgiveness is a sin, we will view it as an option. As long as we view it as an option, we will feel justified in our unforgiveness. As long as we feel justified in our unforgiveness, we will not repent of it and be bound to the torment that goes with it. But when we confess our sin of unforgiveness as sin, we are set free!

4. Forgive each offense from your heart.



At this point walk the Participant through the following:

“Lord, I choose to forgive _____, from my heart for _____”.

It is important to help them remember we forgive wounds, not people in general. We forgive people for individual wounds they have caused. Once they get started, the Holy Spirit will lead them to the things He wants them to forgive.

When there is a pause, ask, “Is there anything else?”

Don't be afraid of silence at this point. The Holy Spirit uses silence to work in the heart of the forgiver. He also knows how much this person can handle at one time. When they say, “I can't remember anything else,” affirm them by saying “good.” Assure them that it is fine if they remember more later because now they know what to do.

**** Forgiveness Declaration.**

“Before God, I declare _____ is no longer in my debt.”

5. Seal it with a blessing.

There is a clear foolproof indicator that forgiveness has taken place.

At this point, invite the forgiver to ask God to bless the offending party and look for ways to bless them when possible. If someone has truly forgiven, they are willing to give a



blessing to their offender. This is the undeniable truth that we have laid down the desire for vengeance and have forgiven.

6. Commit to “not remember” the offense.

The enemy loves to remind us of forgiven wounds. Just because you remember the offense, does not mean you haven't forgiven it. When a memory comes, say aloud, "I specifically remember forgiving that." Praise God for the freedom forgiveness brought you.

7. Make pre-forgiveness a lifestyle.

Pre-forgiveness is choosing daily not to receive an offense, but rather taking every relational debt and transferring it immediately to the cross. The blood of Jesus covers all sin, including the ones committed against you.

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We strongly encourage you to get trained in the ministry skill of forgiveness. One of the best ways to do this is to take the Forgiving Forward online course at forgivingforward.com. The website also has many excellent resources to empower you in helping your friends and family experience the freedom of the Gospel through the power of forgiveness.



We have discovered that men can only be spiritually healthy when they are intimately connected with other men. Once this connection takes place, spiritual growth accelerates. Husbands begin to love and serve their wives. Dads begin to spend more time with their children. The local church benefits greatly: more mature and committed leaders.

We have witnessed many churches be greatly impacted by men relationally discipling other men. The ripple effect can be huge. Whether you choose to host a Men's Bootcamp or start a new SPAR Group, spiritual renewal is just waiting to happen. Men are hungry for discipleship opportunities that make them come alive. Let us serve you!

Join us in the pursuit of authentic masculinity

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