

Fully Alive Forgiveness Study Week 2

Resources needed:

- Handout-Your List, Reasons
- Why We Don't Forgive,
- Matthew West's words to his song Forgiveness,
- Listen to Forgiveness by Matthew West, You Tube link <http://youtu.be/oIbCpy0CQEO>

Dear God,

You have shown me that holding on to resentment for the wrongs done to me and refusing to make right my own wrongs has crippled me---- emotionally, spiritually and even physically. I ask You today to help me be honest about the hurts I feel. I've stuffed some and ignored others, but now I am ready to come clean and tell the truth about my pain. As I do, I ask that You give me the strength and the courage so I can release those who have hurt me and let go of my resentments toward them. Only by Your power will I be able to do this, Lord.

I pray, also that You will give me the courage and discernment to know how to make amends to those I have hurt. Help me to be honest as I look back and remember, and guide me as I find the ways to make restitution, where appropriate.

Finally, I pray that I can begin a new life today as I refocus my life on doing Your will in my relationships. Help me set aside my selfishness and set my whole heart on You—I know I have a long way to go. I want the promise found in Job that all my troubles will fade from my memory and be remembered no more. Amen

This part of the study focuses on your forgiveness list. Identifying those people or situations that cause you anger, resentment, fear and hurt. The ultimate goal is to release those people and give you freedom.

Give yourself the gift of taking prayerful time to work on your list. It will change your heart, your relationship with yourself, with God and with those who have hurt you. It's worth it!!,
You will need the "Your List" handout to answer these questions. Put

your response to the questions on “Your List”

1. The Person- list person or situation you resent, fear or was hurt by
Who initially comes to mind that you need to forgive? Feeling anger, hurt or fear can be an indication of a need to forgive.

Who are you angry with?

Who has hurt you?

Are you jealous of anyone?

Against whom have you been holding a grudge? (seeking revenge, making them pay) List specifically how you are doing this. (transfer this information to the “My part” on “The List” handout.

2. What happened? -What was the event, what was said, what happened? List this in the “What happened” column.
For each person or situation you listed, write out what happened. Again, it’s important to get it in black and white, to acknowledge the hurt, pain, anger and fear.

3. Effect-How did what happen impact you in the past and how is it influencing you today?(depressed, worry, overly cautious, angry etc.)
List this in your “Effect” column

4. Damage-what basic needs were injured or hurt: social-don’t know how to keep friends, security-never feel safe....don’t go out of my home, sexual-I disconnect during sex, have extramarital affairs, don’t trust etc.
List this in the “Damage” column

5. My Part- Ask yourself if you have any part in this resentment or injury? (Example-I guard myself..... I gossiped.....I stole..... I talk bad ... I spend too much money.....I don’t eat or I eat too much.....)

Special Note: If you have been abused in the past or in an abusive

relationship you can find great freedom. In the “my part” column you can write “not guilty”. There is nothing you did or have done that causes someone else to hurt you like that. You can be free from the misplaced shame and guilt.

Take this list of hurts, fears, worries, angers etc. to God. Spend some time with Him in prayer asking God to clarify anything you may be struggling with. Ask Him to shine his Light of truth into each of the situations that you have listed.

If God brings anything to mind, write it on Your List.

Ask Jesus if there is anything you have forgotten. Ask God to reveal anything that is hidden or in the dark. Is there any person or situation that you want to avoid?

If God brings anything to mind, write it on Your List.

Listen to the song, “*Forgiveness*” (See link on page 1 and lyrics in attached handout). Write any thoughts or feelings after listening to the song. Write out any prayers you may have.

If you continue to struggle in being able to forgive those on your list; pull out the handout-“*Reasons Why We Don't Forgive*”. Look through the list to see where you are hanging onto any of those reasons to not forgive. List here and turn them to God, asking Him to do for you what you cannot do yourself.

The second part of this study is looking at how we can “clean up our side of the street”, make right where we have gone wrong, or make amends.

Seeking forgiveness

The goal of forgiveness is to clean up our relationships. To get right in our relationship with God and with others.

“Happy are the merciful” (Matthew 5:7) When we extend grace, mercy and forgiveness to others we are happy (blessed).

In addition, we may need to go to others in our lives and seek their forgiveness for wrongs we may have done to them.

“Happy are the peacemakers.” (Matthew 5:9) When we continue giving mercy to those who don’t “deserve” it, extend what God has given to us (forgiveness) we become the peacemaker and are blessed (happy)

Making things right with others (your amends) is the beginning of the end of your isolation from God and others. Still, some of you may think “If God has forgiven me, isn’t that enough? Why should I drag up the past? After all, making amends doesn’t sound natural.”

The answer to that objection is simple: making amends or getting “your side of the street” cleaned up is not about your past so much as it is about your future. Before you can have the healthy relationships that you desire, you need to clean out the guilt, shame, and pain that has caused many of your past relationships to fail.

Luke 6:31 reminds us to treat others the way that you want to be treated. For some of you, that may be very difficult. You have been hurt very badly or abused. Many of you had nothing to do with the wrong committed against you.

To use a garden metaphor, we need to pull out the dead weeds in our past broken relationships so that we can clear a place where our new relationships can be successfully planted or restored.

In My Part, (from Your List) you will find the start of the list of people to whom you owe amends. Transfer the names from Your List, My Part to a fresh piece of paper. This is the start of your amends list. These are the ones whom you have hurt.

Ask the Lord, “Are there people I need to get right with? Please bring to my mind those that I may have hurt. Give me a willing heart and attitude.”

If more people come to mind add them to Your List, My Part. IN ADDITION- write down what pain you have caused them. Take ownership of your wrongs.

Example: My Part-I lied and didn't tell the whole truth. Pain cause- hurt, anger, rejection, lack of trust and fear.

Here are few additional questions that may help you identify people who you need to seek forgiveness from. Add them to your list.

- Is there anyone you're broken a promise to? Kids, spouse?
- Is there anyone you have not appreciated or paid attention to?
- Is there anyone you have been unfaithful to?
- Have you ever lied to anyone?
- Is there anyone you are overly possessive of?
- Is there anyone to whom you owe a debt that you haven't repaid?
Friend, family member a business?

When you are making your list, don't worry about the "how-to's" in making your amends. Don't ask questions like, "How could I ever ask my dad for forgiveness? How could I ever forgive my brother for what he did?" Go ahead and put the person on your list anyway. "Treat others as you want them to treat you" (Luke 6:31, TLB).

Next week we will talk about how to seek forgiveness and make things right in these relationships. This week you are just making the list. But...If God is prompting you to go to someone and make amends, do so.

NEXT SESSION-Bring all your personal paperwork from this lesson.