



DISCIPLES ACADEMY
NEXT LEVEL

FREEDOM FROM UNFORGIVENESS & BITTERNESS

WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

1) FORGIVENESS: to let go, to no longer seek payment/payback, to no longer discuss or keep records of wrongs.

2) FORGIVENESS IS A CHOICE. (Forgiveness it is not based on our emotions it on act of obedience)

Note: We don't forgive because we feel like doing it, we forgive because we have been forgiven and are commanded to.)

Ephesians 4:31-32 (NLT) 31. Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. 32. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. **(God forgives and we forgive others)**

3) WE KNOW WE HAVE FORGIVEN SOMEONE WHEN THE MEMORY NO LONGER CAUSES PAIN AND THERE IS NO DESIRE TO PAY THEM BACK.

Note: We have forgiven them when we no longer celebrate their harm but are now able to celebrate their success.

WHY IS IT DIFFICULT TO FORGIVE?

1) WE BELIEVE THAT THE PERSON DOESN'T DESERVE IT AND NEEDS TO **EARN** IT.

Note: We must remember that God forgave us, when we didn't deserve it. Jesus suffered and died for us while we were still sinners.

A. JESUS DIDN'T MAKE US EARN FORGIVENESS BEFORE HE **SACRIFICED** HIS LIFE FOR US.

Romans 5:8 (NLT) But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

B. JESUS PROCLAIMED **FORGIVENESS** BEFORE WE ASKED FOR IT.

Luke 23:34 (NLT) Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."

2) WE ENJOY HOLDING ON TO A GRUDGE AND THOUGHTS OF **REVENGE**.

Romans 12:19 (NLT) Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. . . .

3) WE **FEAR** THE DISCOMFORT OF REVISITING THE MEMORIES OF PAST HURTS AND CONFRONTING OUR OFFENDERS.

4) UNFORGIVENESS HAS NOW BECOME A DEMONIC **STRONGHOLD** REINFORCED BY A SPIRIT OF HATE, ANGER AND BITTERNESS.

5) WE HAVE A **VICTIM** MENTALITY AND ENJOY PLAYING THE ROLE. (When we have a victim mentality, we like people feeling sorry for us and the negative attention. When we have a victim mentality, we always take everything personal, misread people and situations and are easily offended.)

THREE BLESSINGS OF FORGIVING OTHERS

BLESSING #1- A RESTORATION OF GOD'S FAVOR AND PROSPERITY IN OUR LIVES. (Unforgiveness will always take us out of a place of accessing Gods blessings and having healthy relationships.)

Job 42:10 (NLT) When Job prayed for his friends, the Lord restored his fortunes. In fact, the Lord gave him twice as much as before!

BLESSINGS #2- GOD'S LOVE WILL FLOW AND GROW IN OUR LIVES. (Unforgiveness will always stop Gods love from flowing through our hearts and lives. Unforgiveness will make us feel that we don't love that person anymore but in reality we just turned off the faucet. Forgiveness is like turning the faucet of God's love on again. After we forgive we can now receive Gods love and give it.)

Proverbs 17:9 (NLT) Love prospers when a fault is forgiven, but dwelling on it separates close friends.

Dwelling (sana): To repeat again and again, talk about.

BLESSING #3- WE LEARN HOW TO RECONCILE BROKEN RELATIONSHIPS AND RECONCILE PEOPLE TO GOD. (God has given us a ministry of reconciling sinners to God. The enemy knows that our most important ministry is forfeited if we can't reconcile our relationships with our brothers and sisters in the Lord.)

A. OUR MAIN MINISTRY IS RECONCILING PEOPLE TO GOD. (Soul winning stops when offenses and unforgiveness take over our hearts.)

2 Corinthians 5:19 (NLT) For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.

Reconciliation (katallge): To put an end to hostility, bringing opposing parties together, make peace, restoration of the favor of God.

B. JESUS PRIORITIZES RELATIONSHIPS OVER GIFTS AND TALENTS. (We should never do any ministry under a spirit of unforgiveness and division.)

Matthew 5:23-24 (NLT) "So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, 24 leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

4 CONSEQUENCES OF UNFORGIVENESS

CONSEQUENCE #1- UNFORGIVENESS OPENS THE DOOR AND INVITES DEMONS INTO OUR LIVES.

(Unforgiveness gives the enemy permission to steal kill and destroy.)

Foothold: a space or room marked off for the devil to secure a base for further advancement.

Ephesians 4:26-27 (NLT) And “don’t sin by letting anger control you. “Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27 for anger gives a foothold to the devil.

Angry (Orgizo): To be enraged, extremely annoyed, irritated, offended, heated, and resentful.

Still angry (Parorgismos): Wrath indignation, fierce anger, deep resentment with a desire to punish and take revenge. Strong displeasure at something considered unjust, offensive, or insulting.

Devil (Diabolos): To slander, accuse, oppose the cause of God, side with the devil, speak maliciously and falsely, defame.

CONSEQUENCE #2- UNFORGIVENESS LEADS TO SPIRITUAL IMPRISONMENT AND TORMENT.

Matthew 18:32-35 (NLT) Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. 33 Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ 34 Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt. 35 “That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart.”

Torture: to afflict with great bodily, mental and emotional pain. To excessively disturb, annoy and make miserable.

CONSEQUENCE #3- UNFORGIVENESS CUTS US OFF FROM GOD AND HIS FORGIVENESS.

Note: We cannot have a double standard. We will be judged by the standard we deal with others. Either we receive and give grace to others or we live by the law and judge people and receive judgment.

Matthew 6:14-15 (NLT) “If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. 15 But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

CONSEQUENCES #4- A ROOT OF BITTERNESS TAKES A HOLD OF OUR LIVES.

Hebrew 12:15 (NKJV) looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

Bitterness: Resentment that has turned into venom which contaminates our hearts, thoughts, and relationships. Bitterness is a deep-seated anger, and depression, accompanied by hostility and a strong desire to take revenge.

Defiled (Miano): To stain, to pollute, defile with sins, make dirty, unclean, make impure or disqualified for use.

A. A STEP-BY-STEP PATH TO BEING BITTER:

- Get offended or hurt.
- Refuse to forgive.
- Resentment: a feeling of anger and depression towards the person who has injured us.
- Root of bitterness.
- Hatred.
- A seared conscience: no longer led by the conviction of the Holy Spirit but driven by bitterness and controlled by resentment.

B. SIGNS THAT WE MIGHT HAVE A ROOT OF BITTERNESS:

- Constantly Complaining about circumstances and people.
- Constantly angry and swearing.
- Isolation-tendency to disconnect from church, ministry, mentorship, and healthy relationships.
- Constantly rehearsing details of what happened and talking about it.

STEPS TO FORGIVING OTHERS AND BEING SET FREE FROM THE ROOT OF BITTERNESS:

STEP #1- ACKNOWLEDGE WHO HURT US AND OUR UNFORGIVENESS TOWARD THEM.

Action plan: Make a list of all the people who have hurt us and write down specifically what they did to us.

STEP #2- REPENT FROM ALL UNFORGIVENESS.

STEP #3- MAKE A DECISION TO FORGIVE THEM AND LET IT GO.

STEP #4- VERBALLY CONFESS OUR FORGIVENESS FOR OUR OFFENDERS BY SPECIFICALLY DECLARING WHAT WE ARE FORGIVING THEM FOR.

***Example prayer:** " I forgive (name of person/persons that we are forgiving) _____ for (Be specific, not general.) I Forgive specific actions, lack of action or neglect. I Forgive hurtful, abusive words or lack of nurturing words. I Forgive how they made you feel. Note: At this step, we may need to go to that person and verbalize our forgiveness. We are letting them know we have forgiven them for all that hurt they have caused us.*

STEP #5- RENOUNCE EVERY SPIRIT OF UNFORGIVENESS, ANGER, HATE, BITTERNESS, OR ANY SPIRIT THAT MAY HAVE COME IN THROUGH HURT.

STEP #6- PRAY A BLESSING OVER THEM.

Note: This prayer activates and releases the love, favor, and healing of God into our lives.

Example Prayer: " Father, in the name of Jesus, I forgive (name of person) for (say specifically what you are forgiven them for) and making me feel (say whatever emotion or pain experienced). Lord, I surrender all my pain and wounds that were caused by the hurt I experienced. I ask you to heal my heart and wounded emotions. Make me whole and fill my heart with your love. I forgive them for everything that they said and did to hurt me. I release them to you Jesus, and I repent for holding on to unforgiveness, anger and bitterness. Lord I renounce all roots of unforgiveness in my life and cancel all consequences of allowing that in my heart. I give up my right to seek revenge. I ask you to give me a heart of compassion toward them and I ask you to bless them and set them free, as you have blessed me and set me free!! I declare and receive my freedom in Jesus name!!!!