



*Ernest
Hemmingway
“The Capital
of the World”*

The ad read:

"Dear Paco, Meet me in front of the newspaper office at noon. All is forgiven. I love you. Papa"

At noon:

800 young men named Paco showed up waiting for their fathers...and waiting for the forgiveness they never thought was possible!

Matthew 6:12-15

12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.'

14 For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

Mark 11:25

25 And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions.

Colossians 3:12-13

12 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;

13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

Definitions of forgiveness (n)

act of pardoning somebody: the act of pardoning somebody for a mistake or wrongdoing

forgiving quality: the tendency to forgive offenses readily and easily

Synonyms: pardon, absolution, amnesty, reconciliation, exoneration, exculpation

Encarta World English Dictionary

The word used by Jesus for forgiveness (*aphiemi*) implies a letting go or release – of a debt or a sin. Paul uses a different term (*charidzomai*) which emphasizes the graciousness of a gift, especially a gift of release or freedom.

Thayer Greek Lexicon



FORGIVENESS IS NOT ...



- **FORGETTING HURTS**
- **EXCUSING BEHAVIORS**
- **TOLERATING SIN**
- **SMOTHERING CONFLICT**
- **ACCEPTING PEOPLE**

Melissa Maples,
“The Difficulty of Forgiveness”



Forgiveness is not an emotion, it is a conscious choice. It is a choice to say: “Although my life is affected I’m not going to dwell on what was done. I’m going to focus my attention on other things.” and “I release that person to God to deal with. I am not going to poison my own life seeking revenge. They will inevitably pay for what they have done, either in this life or the next, but I’m not going to spend my energy being the one to make them pay.”

FORGIVENESS: TWO GOALS



FORGIVENESS: TWO GOALS



- **Restoration of a Broken or Damaged Relationship**



Matthew 18:15-17

15 And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. **16** But if he does not listen *to you*, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. **17** And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer.

FORGIVENESS: TWO GOALS



- **Restoration of a Broken or Damaged Relationship**
- **Removal of Bitterness so Inner Peace Can Prevail**



CONSEQUENCES OF NOT FORGIVING

- **EXPERIENCE BITTERNESS** – This may lead to hate, revenge, lies, etc.

Michael Lane writes



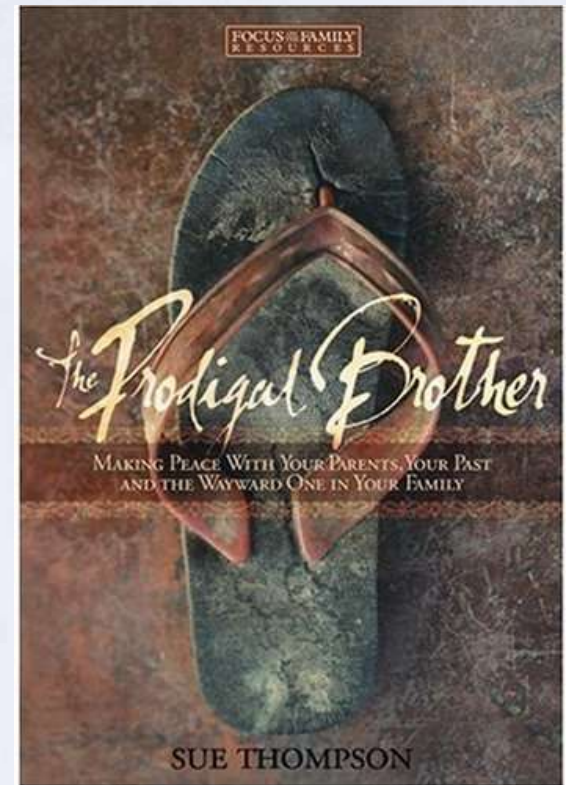
Forgiveness is not initially about the person who wronged us; it's about us. If we will not forgive someone who failed to meet our expectations, we start to change on the inside. We grow in anger and resentment. The quality of our own life continuously suffers and in this way, we compound the wrongdoing until it becomes something far more damaging than it originally was. One of the most important reasons we must forgive is that we cannot grow into the mature Christian whom Jesus is calling us to be with all that hurt and animosity building up inside us. Forgiveness is that act by which we release ourselves from our own prison of bitterness.

CONSEQUENCES OF NOT FORGIVING

- **EXPERIENCE BITTERNESS** – This may lead to hate, revenge, lies, etc.
- **POISONS OTHER RELATIONSHIPS**

Luke 15:28-30

28 "But he became angry, and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and *began entreating him.* 29 "But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you, and I have never neglected a command of yours; and *yet you have never given me a kid, that I might be merry with my friends;* 30 but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with harlots, you killed the fattened calf for him.'



CONSEQUENCES OF NOT FORGIVING

- **EXPERIENCE BITTERNESS** – This may lead to hate, revenge, lies, etc.
- **POISONS OTHER RELATIONSHIPS**
- **SUFFER PHYSICAL ILLNESSES**

Lewis Smedes (an author and theologian)



“The first and often the only person to be healed by forgiveness is the person who does the forgiveness... When we genuinely forgive, we set a prisoner free and then discover that the prisoner we set free was us.”

In her book, Missy Jenkins comments ...



“There were two roads I could have taken: there was a road to be angry about the whole situation and to feel negative about the situation and feel that nothing will get any better or the other road that I'm doing now is to be happy and to live my life and to have a family. And I thank God so much for showing me the right road.”

In her book, Missy Jenkins comments ...



Missy said there is a reason for her amazing accomplishments.

"I think the only explanation I can give is that God gave me the ability to forgive."

A CHALLENGING QUESTION



**Can we forgive those who do
not repent (*or seek our
forgiveness*)?**

CONSIDER



Lk. 23:33-34

33 And when they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him and the criminals, one on the right and the other on the left. 34 But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." And they cast lots, dividing up His garments among themselves.

I Peter 2:21-23

21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting *Himself* to Him who judges righteously;

CONSIDER



Matthew 5:44

44 But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you

II Corinthians 13:5

5 (Love) does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*,

NIV “does not keep a record of wrongs.”



The worst dungeon on this earth is a dungeon of an unforgiving heart. The thing about an unforgiving heart is that you don't hurt the one you aren't forgiving; you are just hurting yourself. You are doing a number on yourself. You are causing yourself to be miserable. Every time you recall that hurt, you are engaging in yet another rendezvous with pain. Is this fair to yourself? The only way to heal the pain is to forgive the person who hurt you.

Stephen Felker

Lewis Smedes, Forgive and Forget



“Forgiving is love’s toughest work and love’s biggest risk.”

THREE SUGGESTIONS



**#1 Discover the kinks in
your own “spiritual hose.”**

HE PAID A DEBT

An American Folk Hymn

He paid a debt He did not owe,

I owed a debt I could not pay.

I needed someone to ash my sins away.

And now I sing a brand new song;

“Amazing Grace.”

Christ Jesus paid the debt that I could never pay.

Matthew 18:32-35

32 Then summoning him, his lord said to him, “You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you entreated me. 33 Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, even as I had mercy on you?” 34 And his lord, moved with anger, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him. 35 So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart.

NICKEL MINES SCHOOL TRAGEDY



Oct. 2, 2006

A story of Charlie Roberts shooting ten girls.

An amazing story of forgiveness



THREE SUGGESTIONS



#1 Discover the kinks in your own “spiritual hose.”

#2 Change the way you look at people – expectations & struggles.



Hilda's Unfaithfulness to Fouke
Caused Great Pain



Fouke Needed “Magic Eyes” in Order
to Forgive Hilda

CHANGING HOW WE VIEW OTHERS



- **Be assured, you do not know “the whole story.”**
- **See people as objects of God’s love.**
- **Seek to understand *weakness* rather than *meanness*.**

THREE SUGGESTIONS



#1 Discover the kinks in your own “spiritual hose.”

#2 Change the way you look at people – expectations & struggles.

#3 Trust God’s power in our lives & in the world.

Melissa Maples,
“The Difficulty of Forgiveness”



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“ ‘You mentioned Ravensbrück in your talk,’ he was saying, ‘I was a guard there. But since that time,’ he went on, ‘I have become a Christian. I know that God has forgiven me for the cruel things I did there, but I would like to hear it from your lips as well. Fräulein,’ again the hand came out—‘will you forgive me?’

And I stood there and could not forgive. Betsie had died in that place—could he erase her slow terrible death simply for the asking?

It could not have been many seconds that he stood there—hand held out—but to me it seemed hours as I wrestled with the most difficult thing I had ever had to do.

For I had to do it—I knew that. “And still I stood there with the coldness clutching my heart. “And so woodenly, mechanically, I thrust my hand into the one stretched out to me “ ‘I forgive you, brother!’ I cried. ‘With all my heart!’

For a long moment we grasped each other’s hands, the former guard and the former prisoner. I had never known God’s love so intensely, as I did then”



“I’m Still Learning to Forgive” by Corrie ten Boom.

Philippians 4:13

13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Jesus' encounter with the woman in John 8 reveals His great interest in forgiveness & redemption.





Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool."



Psalm 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.



Micah 7:19 He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, Thou wilt cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea.

