

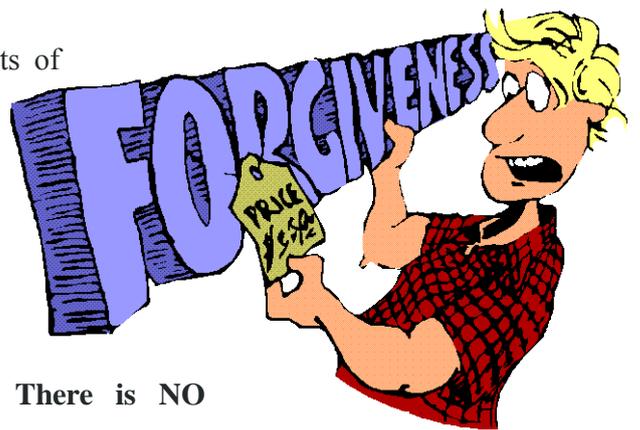
Forgiveness

The Key to Freedom

FORGIVENESS: It is the PROCESS. Not the PERSON!

Hmmmm...ok now let's get into the nuts and bolts of forgiveness.

'SHOULD WE FORGIVE?' is never the question.
No!



Understand that WE HAVE TO FORGIVE. There is NO OTHER OPTION.

If we do not forgive, the unforgiveness will only rot you out.

The right question to ask is, **HOW DO WE FORGIVE?**

Let us take it a step further. **HOW DO WE FORGIVE THE UNDESERVING AND THE UNFORGIVABLE?**

That is very tough. Am I right? To forgive those we think that deserve forgiveness is easy. But to forgive those we think that don't deserve forgiveness is tough.

But consider it like this, only when you forgive someone, or if I may put it differently, only when we let someone off the hook, someone who does not deserve forgiveness, only then would the real meaning of the term forgiveness be fulfilled. If you are forgiving someone who deserves to be forgiven, then you are only doing a favour in return or doing a favour because the other person deserves it. Whereas when you forgive someone who is actually unforgivable, then your

forgiveness has greater value. The one forgiven will then value the forgiveness he has received much much much much much more. One who cannot be forgiven at all and deserves great punishment, will then actually value the heart of forgiveness.

So, it is required that we forgive. Or else, let me say this again, un-forgiveness will eat you from the inside. We now come to another question. What if the other person does not accept or receive your forgiveness? Your process of forgiveness does not depend on whether this person has accepted your forgiveness or not. He or she might constantly ignore your forgiveness and might even point out from time to time that he or she has not done anything wrong. So your forgiving the other person is totally an act from your side, your decision. Please note that I have intentionally used the word 'process'. Oh yeah! Forgiveness is not a one-time act. It is a process. It starts from a one-time act, but it is a process.



What does this process involve?

Every time you are reminded of the things this person has done against you, you need to make an intentional choice not to entertain those negative thoughts but remind yourself that you have started the journey/ the process to give forgiveness to this person.

Every time you are tempted to narrate this whole incident about what the person has done, please resist that temptation to share and even if you do share, make it very short and choose to make it insignificant.

Every time there is a similar incident occurring or is about to occur, be wise and learn from your past experience quickly make a way of escape and guard yourself. Don't sit there waiting to be hit the same way. Guard and cover yourself. Be wise.

Every time you feel or sense anger inside of you and you tend to negatively blame a particular situation, recover quickly and understand that you are in control of your life and you can move it in the direction you want to.

Can you work with these principles right now? I will write more next week. This itself is a lot to chew and act upon.

I am in a school in one of the remote villages near Kanyakumari, the tip of India.

Today, I did a session on forgiveness. A teacher who was sitting behind came up to me after the session. She is in her fifties. She began to weep like a baby. My heart broke seeing her cry. She had bottled unforgiveness deep inside for so many years and this is the first time she has ever opened up. She could not even breathe as she wept.

I sat there listening and crying with her. Then slowly she began to speak. She said that she was unable to be loving with the kids. She knows that it is her bottled up anger and unforgiveness that has patterned her life this way. I heard her out and talked about just one principle. It is the principle of Gratitude and Grace. Only when you are grateful for where God has brought and raised you up today, can you be gracious.