

Lessons Learned
How To Forgive When You Can't Forget

1. _____

John 15:11 *I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!*

Luke 15: 28-32 *The older brother was angry and wouldn't go in. His father came out and begged him...*

Matthew 18:33-35 *Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt. "That's what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart.*

2. Does this mean _____

Read Matthew 18:15-20

3. What's my _____

a) I choose to _____

Luke 11:2-4 *Father, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. Give us each day the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And don't let us yield to temptation.*

b) _____

- Journal about the offense
- Picture the scales of justice
- Pray the words

KEY: Forgiveness is _____

c) I make _____

- I will not bring this _____
- I will not bring this _____
- I will not bring this _____

Replace it: _____

What Forgiveness is Not

- Forgiveness does not mean condoning or excusing a wrong. And it doesn't minimize or justify the wrong.
- Forgiveness doesn't mean you shouldn't have any more feelings about the situation.
- Forgiveness doesn't mean there is nothing further to work out in the relationship or that everything is okay now.
- Forgiveness doesn't mean you should forget the incident ever happened.
- Forgiveness doesn't mean you have to continue to include the person in your life in the way they were involved.
- Forgiveness is not based on the wrongdoer's actions. Even if the other person never apologizes, we should forgive.
- Forgiveness does not mean trust. Forgiveness should be freely given, trust must be earned. trust must be built with consistent truth-telling over a period of time.

1. Forgiveness has to do with the past. Forgiveness is not holding something someone has done against her. It is letting it go. It only takes one to offer forgiveness. And just as God has offered forgiveness to everyone, we are expected to do the same (see Matthew 6:12&18:35).

2. Reconciliation has to do with the present. It occurs when the other person apologizes and accepts forgiveness. It takes two to reconcile.

3. Trust has to do with the future. It deals with both what you will risk happening again and what you will open yourself up to. A person must show through his actions that he is trustworthy before you trust him again (see Matthew 3:8; Proverbs 4:23).

3 Steps toward Reconciliation

- 1) Demonstrating genuine repentance
- 2) Restitution where and when possible
- 3) Rebuilding trust. Rebuilding trust takes time

To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable, because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you. Cs Lewis