

Forgive One Another

Pastor Barb & Vince

Scripture

Bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Thought

Vince and I have been married for 22 years and dated three years before we got married. Needless to say, we have had hundreds of “complaints against each other” and there have been hundreds of things, both big and small, that we have had to forgive each other for. Sometimes forgiveness has been easy, sometimes it has been a decision we made, which was slowly followed by emotions, and sometimes it was a minute my minute choice that we both had to be resolute in. We have both hurt each other deeply at different times. And there have been times when neither of us wanted to extend forgiveness. But through it all we have come to learn a profound truth about forgiving, whether it be each other, or others. Forgiveness has very little to do with the person or the offense but rather our ability to believe that God sees, and God works on our behalf. When I trust that God, who sees the whole picture, not just my limited perspective, will render justice on my behalf, in whatever manner He sees best, I can let the offense rest with Him. In marriage I need to trust that God will speak to my spouse and convict them, lead them, and guide them, and therefore I can let go of my need for retribution. Even if that person who has hurt me never apologizes, I can let go of the offense, because I know forgiveness does not “excuse” their actions. Rather forgiveness frees me from the poison that offense brings to my heart. When I forgive, I set myself free, and that is one of the greatest gifts I can give myself and my marriage. There is an old adage that says unforgiveness is drinking poison and wondering why the other person isn’t dying. Unforgiveness kills you and it will destroy your marriage. Remember, your spouse will hurt you, they are only human, but you will also hurt them. So the same forgiveness you give today is the same forgiveness you’ll need to receive tomorrow.



Action Step

Train your mind to remember that usually, your spouse is not out to hurt you or offend you. Stop looking for reasons to take offense. Decide that you are going to live offense proof. Then start assuming the best about your spouse – they didn’t mean that comment the way it came out, or they were troubled by something at work and that’s why they seemed abrupt with you... get the point? Assume they love you and would never intentionally hurt you. If there are hurts from the past, repent of your part in them. Own your mistakes and ask for forgiveness. If the hurt and offense is too big to handle on your own, involve a pastor or counsellor in the process. But do whatever it takes to find your way to forgiveness. Decide that you will leave the hurt with Jesus, trusting Him fully. You will be free and that is the only way to truly live. (If you are really struggling with forgiving yourself or your spouse, I suggest listening to Pastor Jachins’ message “Paid In Full” from Aug 30, 2020.)

Prayer

Lord give me your grace to forgive any wrongs done against me. Also give me your grace to repent for the wrongs that I need to own in my marriage. Heal my heart and let me leave the offense with you. Give me your grace to choose to assume the best about my spouse and their intentions toward me and help me to live offense proof. Help me to choose forgiveness daily and live free. In Jesus Name. Amen

Day 11

P.S.

Once something has been dealt with – leave it. Remembering hurts from 10 years ago isn’t going to help you be free or happy. Let them go.