

Week 3: The Power of Forgiveness

Speaker: Patricia Driggers

1. Forgiveness is a Choice

- Forgiveness is not automatic—it's a conscious decision. (Matthew 6:12)
- You may not feel like forgiving, but obedience brings freedom.

2. Forgiveness is Acknowledging the Hurt

- You can't heal from what you don't acknowledge.
- Recognize the pain caused and bring it to God.

3. Forgiveness is Setting Boundaries

- Forgiveness does not mean allowing continued mistreatment.
- Set healthy boundaries to protect yourself from further harm.

4. Forgiveness is Showing Mercy

- Jesus modeled mercy on the cross (Luke 23:34).
- Extending mercy reflects God's grace toward us. (Luke 11:4)

5. Forgiveness is Letting Go of Resentment

- Don't keep a record of wrongs (1 Corinthians 13:5).
- Letting go releases the emotional weight of bitterness. (Hebrews 12:15)

6. Forgiveness is Taking Responsibility for Your Own Life

- You are responsible for your emotional and spiritual health.
- Choosing forgiveness allows you to live with peace and freedom. (Romans 12:19)

7. Forgiveness is Facing Reality

- Reconciliation isn't always possible or healthy.
- Forgiveness doesn't mean the relationship will be restored.

8. Forgiveness is a Process

- Forgiveness isn't always instant—it's an ongoing process.
- Keep choosing to release resentment daily.

9. Forgiveness is a Mindset

- Adjust your thoughts to align with God's truth.
- Replace negative self-talk with positive affirmations.

10. Forgiveness is a Lifestyle

- Make forgiveness a habit, not just a one-time decision.
- Consistently release hurt and trust God with the outcome.

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What Forgiveness is NOT:

- Approval – Forgiving does not mean you approve of the offense.
- Forgetting – You may remember, but true forgiveness removes the emotional hold.
- Justifying – Forgiveness doesn't make wrong behavior acceptable.
- Obligation – Forgiveness is a choice, but it's also commanded by God.
- Giving In – Forgiveness doesn't mean staying in an unhealthy relationship.
- Reconciliation – Forgiveness is personal; reconciliation requires mutual effort.
- Rehiring – You don't have to let someone back into your life to repeat the offense.
- Trust – Trust is earned over time and may never fully return.
- Revenge – Justice belongs to God, not you (Romans 12:19).

Self-Talk Strategies:

- Catch it – Identify negative thoughts tied to resentment.
- Check it – Ask yourself if it aligns with God's truth.
- Change it – Replace negative thoughts with positive affirmations.
- Example: Replace "I can't forgive them" with "God gives me strength to forgive."

Things to Think About (Discussion Questions):

- What does it mean to forgive someone without excusing their behavior?
- How can you establish healthy boundaries while walking in forgiveness?
- How does showing mercy reflect God's nature to others?
- Why is it hard to trust God with justice instead of seeking revenge yourself?
- How can you develop a forgiving attitude even when reconciliation isn't possible?
- What are some self-talk strategies you can use to release bitterness and resentment?

What Forgiveness IS -a choice

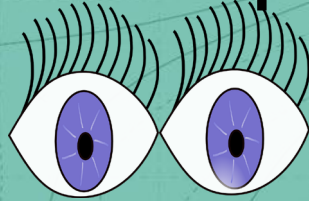
(Forgiveness...the ultimate miracle; Paul J. Meyer, 2006; pp. 2-11)

Forgiveness is acknowledging the hurt.



- What are some examples of hurtful words or actions?

Forgiveness is keeping your eyes open.



- Looking out for ways to limit hurtful experiences
- Nobody deserves to be abused or taken advantage of.

Forgiveness is showing mercy.

- Remember Christ's example on the cross. Luke 23:34 - "Forgive them for they know not what they do."
- Luke 11:4 - "And forgive us our sins; **for we also** forgive every one that is indebted to us."

**Forgive us our debts, AS we forgive our
debtors.**

Matthew 6:12

Forgiveness is keeping no record of wrongs.

Don't make mental or physical lists of wrongdoings. This will **harbor** an unforgiving spirit.



Forgiveness is living free from bitterness.

- Strive not to let any **root** of bitterness spring up.



Forgiveness is taking responsibility for your own life.

- **Choose** freedom, peace, and hope instead of being reactive or wanting to be reactive every time you are wronged.
- Remember, justice is God's job.

Forgiveness is being honest about reality.

- Being in denial could start a root of bitterness.
- Reconciliation would be great, but it might not happen.

Forgiveness is an attitude.

- Think and act forgiveness.
- What are some actions to help you do this?
- What are some self-talk examples to aid in possessing a forgiving attitude?



Forgiveness is a lifestyle.

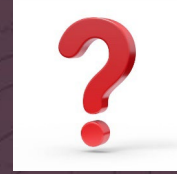
- Learn to move from hurt to healing continually as you live your life.
- Make it a healthy habit by consistently utilizing actions and self-talk that promotes a forgiving lifestyle.

Self-Talk Statements

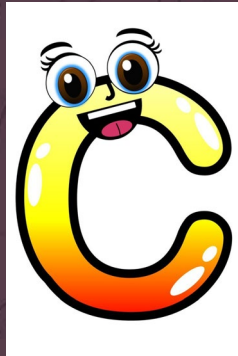
- You must replace every negative self-talk statement with three positive ones to negate it.
- This really does work if you consistently practice it. 😊



The 3 C's of Negative Self-Talk



- Catch it.
- Check it.
- Change it.



What are some examples of a negative self-talk statement and a + replacement statement?

What Forgiveness is NOT

(Forgiveness...the ultimate miracle; Paul J. Meyer, 2006; pp. 2-11)

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**Forgiveness is not approval of
the behavior.**

Forgiveness is not forgetting.

- You may never be able to forget what happened.
- But... if you have truly forgiven the person, you should no longer feel the pain, anxiety, and/or anger.

Forgiveness is not justifying the behavior.

What are some examples of justifying bad behavior?



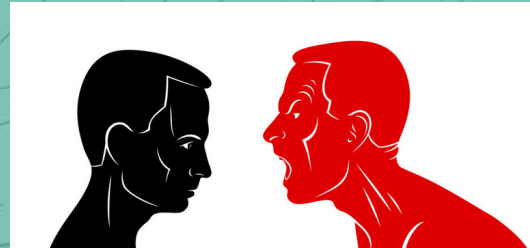
Forgiveness is not an obligation.



- Remember, it is your choice.
- However, it is also God's commandment to us so we can be forgiven by God.

Forgiveness is not giving in.

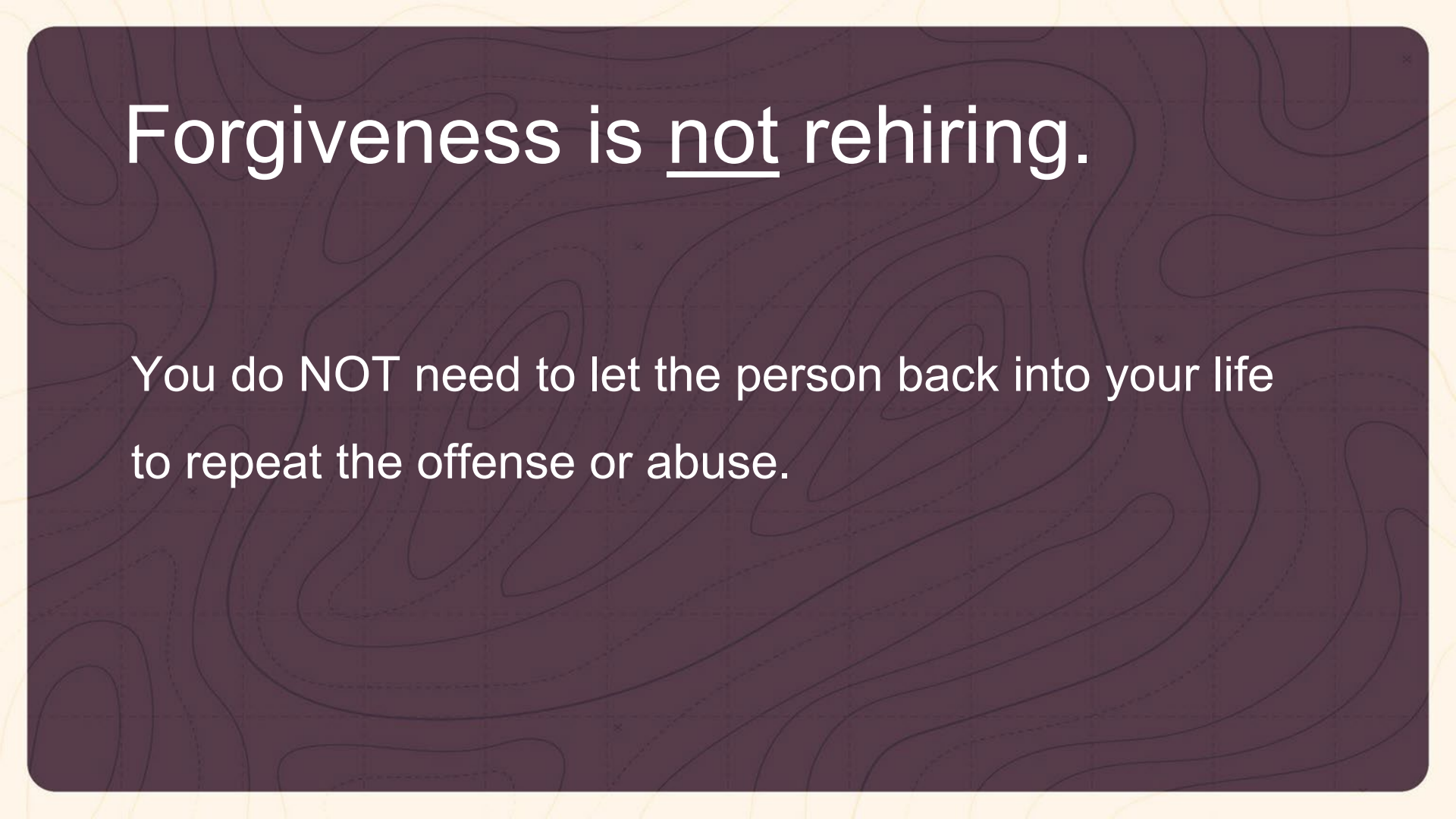
- You should not stay with people who consistently hurt or abuse you.



Forgiveness is not reconciliation.

- Chain example
- Is avoiding someone in a restaurant an action that shows that you have forgiven them? You are being watched by them and by others.



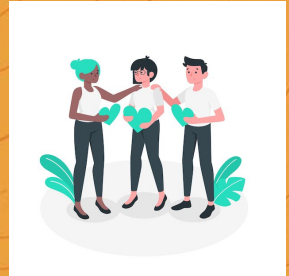
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Forgiveness is not rehiring.

You do NOT need to let the person back into your life to repeat the offense or abuse.

Forgiveness is not trust.

- You may trust again but it takes time. Or...you may never completely trust the person who wronged you.
- Choosing forgiveness can help you have healthy, trusting relationships with other people.



Forgiveness is not getting even (taking revenge).

- Justice is God's job.
- “The real price of forgiveness is what it costs you to give up an unforgiving attitude” or give up your right to get even.” (Meyer, p.21)