

Week 2: The Power of Forgiveness

Speaker: Patricia Driggers

1. Forgiveness Brings Freedom

- Forgiveness releases chains in both horizontal (human) and vertical (God) relationships.
- Unforgiveness creates spiritual and emotional bondage.
- Jesus calls us to forgive as we have been forgiven (Matthew 6:14-15).

2. Forgiveness Has Emotional and Physical Benefits

- Forgiveness improves emotional and mental health:
- Reduces stress and anxiety.
- Improves sleep and lowers blood pressure.
- Strengthens immunity.
- A Johns Hopkins study confirmed that forgiveness positively impacts overall health.

3. Forgiveness Brings Reconciliation (But It's Not Guaranteed)

- Forgiveness opens the door to reconciliation, but reconciliation requires effort from both parties.
- Paul urged the church to seek peace and reconciliation when possible (Romans 12:18).
- Forgiveness is an individual choice; reconciliation is a mutual process.

4. Forgiveness is a Choice, Not a Feeling

- Forgiveness is not based on emotions—it's an act of obedience to God.
- "Forgive, and you will be forgiven." (Luke 6:37)
- Choosing to forgive allows God to handle justice rather than taking it into our own hands (Romans 12:19).
- Forgiveness requires faith and surrender to God's authority.

5. Forgiveness Allows God to Work Through Us

- Forgiveness restores your relationship with God and strengthens your faith.
- When you release bitterness, you create room for God to work in your life.
- "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)

6. Unforgiveness Creates Emotional and Physical Bondage

- Holding onto bitterness causes stress-related health issues:
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Anxiety and depression
- Bitterness weighs down the spirit and limits spiritual growth (Hebrews 12:15).

7. Biblical and Historical Examples of Forgiveness

- Joseph forgave his brothers despite their betrayal (Genesis 45:4-5).
- Jesus asked for forgiveness for those crucifying Him (Luke 23:34).
- Leonardo da Vinci had to forgive someone before he could complete The Last Supper—unforgiveness was blocking his creativity.
- Forgiveness restores clarity, peace, and emotional release.

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Things to Think About (Discussion Questions):

- Can you think of a time when forgiveness improved your emotional or physical health?
- How has unforgiveness impacted your relationships or spiritual life?
- Are there any situations where you've experienced reconciliation after offering forgiveness?
- Why do you think forgiveness is sometimes harder to give than to receive?
- How can you trust God to bring justice in situations where you feel wronged?

PATHWAY TO
HEALING AND RESTORATION

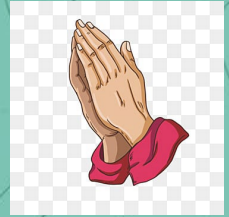
***“The Power of
Forgiveness”***

PATHWAYS
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Acknowledge, Introduce, Duration, Explanation, Thank

The Power of Forgiveness

- 9 Benefits of Forgiveness
- What Forgiveness **IS**
- What Forgiveness is **NOT**
- Bible Verses on Forgiveness
- How to Forgive Yourself

The 9 Benefits of forgiveness

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



1. Forgiveness brings freedom.

- No more chains to hinder your horizontal relationships and vertical relationship



2. Forgiveness brings power.

- Over your will, emotions, and health



3. Forgiveness is good for your health.

(Johns Hopkins Medicine. Forgiveness: Your Health Depends On It. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/forgiveness-your-health-depends-on-it>)

- Physicians call unforgiveness “grudge-itis”.
- Forgiving helps people have less stress and lower blood pressure.
- People who refuse to forgive, or hold onto grudges, have increased risk of heart disease, cardiovascular illness, cancer, weakened immune system, diabetes, and depression.
- The act of forgiveness lowers risk of heart attack, lowers cholesterol and blood pressure, improves sleep, and reduces pain, anxiety, depression, and stress.



Any examples of health improving after forgiving or examples of health worsening when bitter or unforgiving?

4. Forgiveness releases your creativity.

- Leonardo DaVinci-story of painting The Last Supper



5. Forgiveness restores your relationship with God.

- Matthew 6:14-15 - For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

6. Forgiveness is easier than unforgiveness.

- Physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually

7. Forgiveness brings reconciliation. (sometimes)

- Reconciliation depends on the other person, but you have done your part.



Any examples of successful reconciliation? Any examples of no success?

8. Forgiveness brings hope, joy, and a better future.

- Much better than holding onto bitterness and being miserable
- Wouldn't you rather choose hope, joy, and a better future?

9. Forgiveness allows God to bring justice.

- Forgiving your enemy puts you above him/her.
- It is your choice.
- Justice is up to God. It is not your concern.

“When you let God bring the justice, it will be more than you could have asked or imagined.” (Meyer, p. 11)

Taking revenge or harboring a revengeful spirit is never helpful and is always hurtful.

Summary Statements

- “Forgiveness does not just happen. It is always an act of the will.” (Meyer, p. 4)
- “Our job is to let go, to forgive, and to trust God to work on our behalf. The Bible says that He will never leave us and never forsake us.” (Meyer, p. 10)

The LORD himself goes before you and will
be with you; he will never leave you nor
forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be
discouraged.

Deut. 31:88

Choosing to continue being fearful and discouraged means saying “Yes” to possible health issues-physically, mentally (depression), emotionally (anxiety/fear), and spiritually. Take care of your relationship with God. Part of that process is taking care of yourself.