

First Baptist Church of Progress Village
Summer Bible Institute Series
Forgiveness: The Turning Point to Good Endings
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Forgiveness: The Benefit Package

"[Withholding forgiveness is like you] drinking the rat poison but expecting the rat to die."

Anne Lamott

Unforgiveness holds you captive, with detrimental repercussions. (p.34)

Unforgiveness acts as a roadblock, impeding our progress emotionally, relationally, and spiritually.

Reasons we don't forgive:

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- Will cost us more than it will benefit us.
 - Will result in our offenders winning.
 - Will mean we have to trust the person again.
 - We minimize the offense or the hurt it caused.
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Who did Joseph need to forgive? Who did Joseph need to be forgiven by?

Benefits:

1. We become more like Jesus.

Luke 23:34 (KJV) *Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.*

2. We experience freedom.

John 8:31-36 (NASB) *So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." ...36 "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.*

3. We gain potential for healing.

Proverbs 17:22 (KJV) *A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.*

Isaiah 53:5 (KJV) *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our*

iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

4. We offer freedom to **others**.

Remember every offender has a backstory. Not an excuse, but journey that led them to offend others.

Romans 5:6-8 (KJV) *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

5. Opens the door for **reconciliation**.

2 Corinthians 5:17-20 (KJV) *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

6. Open the door for restoration if **appropriate**.

You can be reconciled, without being restored! The two ARE mutually exclusive! I can love you and not like what you do!

Question: Do you know someone susceptible to a certain kind of offense, like repeated abuse or financial scams? How can we be truly forgiving while not falling for the sme thing again?

Journal: Look at the list of metaphors for unforgiveness (prison, poison, roadblock, play money, and cancer). Which one speaks to you personally? Draw an image that illustrates the idea, then another that illustrates freedom from it. Caption it with a verse about forgiveness.