



The High Cost of Forgiveness

Adapted from "Healing Life's Hurts through Forgiveness" series by Dr. George O. Wood

If one were to look at the life of Jesus, you could match the healing of Jesus with the hurts that are in our life. We have the realization that if we want real inner healing, that it must come through forgiveness. Both receiving forgiveness and giving forgiveness.

As you go through this lesson, focus on the person or persons who have done you the most hurt. Think about how this message applies to the people who have done you wrong. And perhaps the Spirit will bring to mind the persons whom you have done wrong to also.

The Holy Spirit is the keeper of the springs in our life. He is the source of the emotional resources that water our being. It is sometimes the case that things collect in the pool of our lives which would equal or are tantamount to fallen leaves, mold, mud, and dirt. It is then that the springs of our life become fouled. This can cause our outer nature to become changed and different over a course of time.

One of the things that the Holy Spirit wants to do in us is to allow the clean water of personality to flow out through us. I think if I were to identify the thing which most plugs up the systems of wholesome personality it would have to be unforgiveness. The Holy Spirit, as the keeper of the springs, wants to take us through the scriptures and take us to the heart of Christ to see if there are some areas of our life that are clogged that need the healing and cleansing work of Christ.

"Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. May not copy or download more than 500 consecutive verses of the ESV Bible or more than one half of any book of the ESV Bible."

COURAGE

C1: How would you describe forgiveness? Describe a time in your life when you were forgiven. Describe a time in your life when you have you forgave someone.

C2: In the introduction, the analogy is used of the Holy Spirit as the keeper of the springs in our life.

- How much of a role does the Holy Spirit play in your life?
- Describe a time in your life were the Holy Spirit has used forgiveness, whether given or received to restore a relationship in your life?
- How do you find the courage in the power of the Holy Spirit to forgive others?

C3: Read and answer the following.

Matthew 3:1–2 (ESV) In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Matthew 4:17 (ESV) From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

- What are your thoughts about repentance and how would you describe what it looks like in your life in the area of forgiveness?
- How have you changed due to the repentance in your life?

STRENGTH

S1: Forgiving is not an easy process but one that's needed if we want an inner peace and healing.

- Describe a time in your life where you found the strength to begin the healing process by forgiveness?
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very clean and 4 being not very clean, rate yourself on how well your life is free and clean in the area of forgiveness. Write out a plan to improve.

S2: Unforgiveness has a cost, it brings despair and distance between us and another person. Answer the following.

- Is there unforgiveness in your life causing distance between you and another?
- Are you allowing the Holy Spirit to work through forgiveness in your life?
- If you answered yes to having unforgiveness in your life, how can you rectify this area of unforgiveness?

S3: Answer the following.

- Are you ready to forgive no matter the cost?
- Is my forgiveness unconditional or does it depend upon the other person changing and becoming worthy?

- Are you open to all the good in the person who hurt you and thus find yourself responding in love to the one who hurt you?

- Can you focus not on the hurt, but on the change and growth in both parties involved and thereby celebrate and give thanks?

- Can you try to become closer to them than you were before the hurt ever occurred?

- How can you improve so you are able to do the above?

ENDURANCE

E1: In the next thirty days, meet with three men and discuss the importance of forgiveness. What did you glean from these conversations? How does the Holy Spirit aid in healing life's hurts?

E2: Describe a time in your life when you have forgiven someone. What did it cost you physically, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally?

E3: List some reasons why you think it is hard to forgive. Do a word search in your Bible on forgiveness. What do you glean from the Scriptures in comparison to the reasons you think it is hard to forgive?

E4: Read and answer the following.

Ephesians 4:31-32 (ESV)

- What do you glean from these scriptures?

- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how well you are living out these two verses. Write out a plan to improve.