

BREAKING FREE 6 – Freedom in Forgiveness

BIG IDEA: Unforgiveness is a PRISON

If you allow a seed of OFFENCE to take root in the soil of INSECURITY it produces a root of BITTERNESS leading to the fruit of RESENTMENT

What part of this process do you personally identify with the most & why?

Eph 4:26-27 (adapted) → In your OFFENCE do not SIN: Do not let the sun go down before you have FORGIVEN and do not give the DEVIL a FOOthOLD.

→ *Why do you think unforgiveness feels so justified in the moment, even though it eventually imprisons us?*

→ *Why do people struggle to take for themselves the forgiveness advice they'd willingly and accurately give their friends?*

→ *How does it give the devil a 'foothold'?*

Why Don't We Forgive?

1. There's a deep WOUND

2. It's a real struggle for your FLESH

3. We want to take ownership of JUSTICE

4. Refusing to forgive gives us the ILLUSION of CONTROL

5. There are a whole bunch of LIES we tend to believe

→ *Which of those reasons for not forgiving do you struggle with most?*

→ *What sort of 'wound?' Why is it a struggle for your 'flesh?' Why does forgiving seem to undermine justice? How does it give an illusion of control?*

WHAT are the LIES we're tricked into believing?

1. Forgiveness must be deserved & they don't,, so I won't.

2. I should only forgive them if they're sorry & show they've learnt their lesson.

3. My refusal to forgive is appropriate punishment.

4. Forgiveness hurts them & thus protects me from being hurt by them again

5. The way all this turns out is best under my control; so I'll cling onto it.

6. I will forgive eventually, when I feel like it & then it will be easy

7. Forgiving means I have to let them back into my life with all the access, rights & trust they had before.

8. The pain I feel is not connected to the fact I haven't forgiven them.

9. Forgiveness is for little things & where contrition is shown.

10. Revenge is sweet (Sweet for a moment, poisonous for lifetime)

→ *Which lie has subtly shaped your thinking in the past?*

→ *How has it affected your relationships or spiritual life?*

What's the Biblical Truth?

1. Forgiveness is not about JUSTICE, but FREEDOM (Rom 12:19)

2. Forgiveness is not about FEELINGS, but FAITH (Col 3:13)

3. Forgiveness is not just a DECISION, but a LIFESTYLE (Matt 18:21-22)

→ *Why is pursuing justice enticing but dangerous in this context?*

→ *Why is it so hard to forgive before we feel like it? What might happen if we waited for our emotions to lead?*

→ *How do we make forgiving a 'lifestyle,' a posture or attitude?*

How do we go from Unforgiveness to Forgiveness?

1. Start with HONESTY & acknowledge the WOUND (Psalm 34:8)

2. Remember the Forgiveness YOU'VE RECEIVED (Eph 4:32)

→ *"Forgiveness flows best from those who live in awe of grace." Discuss!*

3. Take it to the Lord in PRAYER (Psalm 62:8)

Your prayer will include:

a) LETTING GO

b) RECEIVING

c) BOLDNESS

d) BLESSING

e) REVISITING

→ *What would it look like to honestly pour out your offence before the Lord in prayer?*

→ *Which of those prayer steps is most difficult for you ... and why?*

→ *Why are you probably going to have to 'revisit' this?*

Heavenly Father,

You see everything — nothing is hidden from You. You know the pain in my heart, the words that were spoken, the actions that wounded me. I bring this hurt before You now. I don't want to carry it anymore.

Lord, I choose to forgive. Not because they deserve it, but because You have forgiven me so freely. I release [Name] into Your hands. I let go of the debt I've been holding. I surrender my desire for revenge, and I trust You to be the Righteous Judge.

Heal me, Father. Where there is bitterness, plant peace. Where there is grief, pour in Your comfort. Where there is brokenness, speak restoration over me.

And now, I bless the one who hurt me. May Your mercy reach them. May Your Spirit soften their heart. Do in their life what only You can do — for Your glory.

Finally, Lord, give me grace. Grace to walk in ongoing forgiveness. Grace to remember what I've released. And grace to live unoffended — free, whole, and rooted in Your love.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.