

**Encouragement for the heart  
from  
Whole Families, Inc.**

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*Forgiveness Misunderstood*

Of all of the subjects in Christendom, forgiveness is one of the most widely misunderstood and misrepresented, in my opinion. Please look with me for a moment at the miracle of forgiveness. I say miracle because of the change that I see in a client before and after applying genuine forgiveness to the biblical standard, or the way that Jesus first demonstrated it for us on the cross. Let us find some of the scripture on how genuine forgiveness would look. One place in scripture that is very familiar to most of us is “The Lord’s Prayer” as found in Matt. 6:9-15. In verse 12 it says “and Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors”. We are actually asking God to fashion the way that he forgives us after the way that we forgive others. This is further explained in Matt. 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 heavenly Father forgive your trespasses”. And again in (Col. 3:13), “Christ forgave you, so also do ye”. Some of the questions that should be asked are; *Jesus how do you forgive me?*

- *Can I withhold forgiveness until I see proper change in the one who has hurt me?*
- *Do I have to trust my offender again after being hurt by them?*
- *Do I have to pray for my offender?*
- *Can I bring up the past against the one who has hurt me after I have forgiven them?*
- *Jesus will you ever bring up the past against me after you have forgiven me*
- *Can I tell others true facts about how my offender has hurt me?*
- *Can I separate myself from them and have hard feelings towards them and resent them?*
- *How soon do I have to have interaction with the one who has hurt me?*
- *Jesus will you avoid me for a time after I have sinned against you?*
- *Tomorrow, if I feel the hurt do I have to go through forgiveness again?*

Forgiveness is the bedrock miracle of Christianity for all times. So many in the church in the USA do not know what real forgiveness is or how and when it should be practiced in one’s life.

The word for-give means: to give up the right to punish, not have hard feelings at or toward, assume the offenders debt as my own, to give in advance, to give before deserving, to give before worthy of, to give before asked for, to give immediately, to give while yet being hurt, to give before the sun goes down, to give before change is seen in the offender, to give before the offender repents or asks for forgiveness. It is also one of God’s requirements for the Christian, (Col. 3:13 forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye). This verse shows that Christ demonstrated it to us on the cross first. Jesus also forgave a larger debt by far than any of us will ever have to forgive (Matt.18:21-35). He also experienced the true pain of the cross, the rejection of His Father and separation from Him, something that we will never experience as Christians. Many, who have forgiven their offender, when confronted after many years of living in the sin of bitterness, will experience a freedom and joy of that load being lifted from them. They then forget that it is a daily obedience as indicated in the Lord’s Prayer. Just because we forgave yesterday does not remove the need to do it daily or hourly as we are confronted with new pain and offence. It is necessary to obey the command to forgive in every area where bitterness could arise. The places where forgiveness should be looked at are; bitterness against God, self, individuals, family, groups, a situation, a disease, or us taking up offence against someone who may have hurt a friend or family member, in which case we are not

directly involved but the answer is still the same, “forgive”. We must understand that to withhold forgiveness for any reason is sin against God, because we are then holding that other person to a higher standard in forgiveness than God holds us to. There is also the false belief that when we forgive the offender, we are releasing the person and giving them rights to continue in their bad behavior. Your forgiveness of them doesn’t change them, it changes you, and they remain on God’s hook and off yours. The need to forgive is an issue between you and God and not you and the offender. Your bitterness against another is like you drinking poison but expecting the other person to fall over dead. Bitterness destroys the vessel that contains it.

#### Offences

In Luke 17:1 the word offences comes from the word skandalon. In the original language it means a bent stick or sapling. This stick is the trigger of a snare or trap. Hunters try to hide a trap well and bait their prey to snare them. Satan and his cohorts’ do the same for God’s people; the enemy is crafty and deceptive at luring us into the snare of bitterness which is meant for our lives. Once we become offended we are then held by the trap and the only way out is through forgiveness.

#### Thank you

In the last news letter I had asked for help with an adoption and related debt that was a stress to us and the ministry. I thank God for His blessing through your generosity to help with that burden. Also, with His blessing we were able to get out of an equal partnership and with those funds are blessed to be

out of debt completely. With the freedom from debt and the stress that it caused, I am relieved to now be able to focus on what God called me to do. We are committed to live on what God gives us through the ministry and do not ever want to turn anyone away. Again thank you so much, and God’s blessing to all that helped and pray for us. Please keep it up!

#### Donations

“Whole Families, Inc” is now incorporated in the state of Colorado. We are organizing as a charitable nonprofit organization under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code, which is pending. For donations made after Dec.15, 2010 WFI is now able to issue a tax deductible receipt. Many lives have been and will be changed by your support.

#### Changes

We will be moving my office to the Westcliffe Community Church in Westcliffe, Colorado. I will function the same as I do now, only in a beautiful, mountainous setting. We thought that we would be near Davenport for a long time, but God has closed doors for us to stay here. Do not let this change stop you from using this ministry, I have been so blessed to meet all of you and want to continue the relationship. Some of the people that I have caused the most disservice are the ones that are in close proximity to the office. Some of the clients that have had to make a larger commitment to come the farthest and take the time for their marriage have received the greatest benefit.

#### Testimony

##### \*The names have been changed

\*Jay and \*Kim were referred to counseling through a caring friend. They had been married for 10 years

and had lately struggled to connect the way God had intended. Kim felt unloved and demeaned by the moral failure and self pity that Jay was in. Jay felt dominated and controlled by Kim as she tried to keep from being hurt over and over again. They could not feel safe to open their hearts and communicate their feelings to each other. When Kim was young she was not cherished by her father and had suffered hurt by her father and a brother that was in trouble with the law and organized crime. Kim was offered a ride home from a graduation party that she was forced to go to by her father and assaulted on the way home. When her father learned that she was pregnant from that assault she was kicked out of the home. Kim was abducted again years later and repeatedly assaulted while held captive for 8 months. Jay also experienced many hurtful things through his first marriage and early life. Because of the many hurts that both of them had experienced before they had met and while they were together, they reacted to each other and did not have open hearts for each other. In the safety of counseling, Jesus was invited into each pain event. He brought healing to that pain and then the bitterness, self-pity, sexual sin, control, and hypocrisy that was used to cover the pain could be dealt with at the root. They were able to connect correctly and ran the batteries down on their cell phones daily. Several months had passed and they had gotten stuck in old patterns again and were feeling hopeless once more. After less than two hours of counsel, being shown that they had to forgive before the sun goes down each day, and to always keep each other’s heart they found joy again. Several months ago I ask how they were doing; Kim told me that she was experiencing real marriage for the first time in her life. God’s word is all powerful when applied his way!

Sincerely *Bradley Reinke*