

# Forgiveness: The Key to Our Future

Phillip E Moore - July 2023

What if: You could receive a KEY... A key that could Unlock Your Future.

What if: This key could CHANGE YOUR LIFE!

I believe the Lord has given us such a KEY

- Look at this Key & How to Use It in our lives.

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One of the most powerful enemies of the Navy

- Lies just beneath the surface
- It's an enemy they Cannot See
- The Threat of this enemy is Constant & Relentless
- Every ship is At Risk
- Every year, the Navy Spends Billions fighting this enemy

That Enemy - The Barnacle

<picture 1>

What they are?

- Barnacles are tiny marine creatures
- Start very small
- They are hard to get rid of

Their impact is Huge!

<picture 2>

- Increase Drag
- Increase Fuel Consumption
- Increase Wear & Tear
- Create Faults

How do they accumulate?

There's a lot of similarity between Barnacles & an Enemy we face.

An ENEMY that

- Lies just below the surface of our lives
- Affects all of us
- Part of Navigating the "oceans of life"
- Attaches itself to our Hearts & Souls
- Unchecked, Will Multiply
- And can Severely Impact the Quality of Life that God intended

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That enemy is Unforgiveness, and our ability to deal with it effectively is Key to Unlocking our Future & the Full Potential God has for us.

## MY STORY

I needed a better understanding of what it REALLY MEANS to walk in Forgiveness.

What I found was:

- FORGIVENESS not only allows us to Effectively Deal with the Past
    - It actually, UNLOCKS OUR FUTURE!
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I want to look at What Forgiveness Is & What it's Not.

- Learn from an example in Scripture of the Power of Forgiveness.
  - Offer a few steps that we can take to utilize the Key of Forgiveness.
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## Why is Forgiveness so Important?

Unforgiveness in our lives is like a barnacle that attaches to our Hearts & Souls.

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*To hold on to an injury and to nurse anger and bitterness, is to allow a cancer to grow in your heart, mind, and soul.*

- Henry Cloud: Trust

We all have a STORY to Tell...

- Unfortunately, we all have been hurt - to some degree or another.
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## The Question Becomes:

- How much have those hurts Attached Themselves to the Hull of our Hearts & Souls?
- How much are we Weighed Down from carrying these hurts?

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*If you are going to be your best, healthiest, and highest performing self, you must forgive.*

- Henry Cloud

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## What is Forgiveness?

### Let's start with what it's NOT.

Forgiveness does not Excuse, Okay, Justify, or Exonerate a person's actions or what happened to us.

- Nor is it necessarily a Restoration of the Relationship.
- Forgiveness is Doable – Restoration is a Strong Maybe

Forgiveness is Letting Go of the Impact of People & Events in our past.

- It's a Freedom from the offense
- We are no longer being trapped by or held to what happened.

FORGIVENESS means:

- Our hearts are Clean of the Debris
  - We're no longer carrying that "Baggage"
  - We're Lighter
  - We're Free from the Past!
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In the book of Genesis, the Bible gives us an incredible illustration from the life of Joseph on how to find forgiveness in our lives.

A beautiful illustration of what forgiveness looks like...

Genesis 45:1-9

Then Joseph could not control himself [any longer] in front of all those who attended him, and he called out, "Have everyone leave me." So no man stood there when Joseph revealed himself to his brothers. <sup>2</sup> Joseph wept aloud, and the Egyptians [who had just left him] heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard of it. <sup>3</sup> Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers were speechless, for they were stunned *and* dismayed by [the fact that they were in] Joseph's presence.

<sup>4</sup> And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come closer to me." And they approached him. And he said, "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. <sup>5</sup> Now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me ahead of you to save life *and* preserve our family. <sup>6</sup> For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are still five more years in which there will be no plowing and harvesting. <sup>7</sup> God sent me [to Egypt] ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on the earth, and to keep you alive by a great escape. <sup>8</sup> So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt. <sup>9</sup> Hurry and go up to my father, and tell him, 'Your son Joseph says this to you: "God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay.

## A Few Things to Note from this Scripture:

### 1. Joseph had Cause for Unforgiveness

- What was done to him was Wrong.

#### Joseph didn't:

- Use it as a "Gotcha moment"
- Respond in Anger & Wrath
- Publicize their offense
- Didn't even make them "Feel Bad" about what they'd done

### 2. Chose to use the Key of Forgiveness

He actually:

- Wept
- Kept the offense private
- Preserved their dignity & self-esteem
- Walked in Forgiveness
  - Even though they never asked for it
    - Never once did the brothers say, "*We're sorry*"

Choosing Forgiveness allowed Joseph to "be free" - without needing or getting anything from his brothers.

### 3. Forgiveness Opened up a whole New Future:

- For Himself
  - Joseph had determined that he wasn't going to be held back or hindered by unforgiveness.
    - "*My life was directed by God – not by what you did to me.*"
- For His Family
  - Joseph used his position & power to Provide for & Bless his family
  - Altering their lives for generations!

## HOW DO WE USE THE KEY OF FORGIVENESS?

### 1. Call it what it is.

Forgiveness sees the offense for what it is.

Anger at its baseline, is just an emotion that tells us something is wrong.

Ephesians 4:26 "In your anger do not sin"

- The Challenge comes when we let anger Reside
  - Hold On to unforgiveness
  - Stay Mad & Get Bitter
  - Look for our Revenge!

Forgiveness allows us to overcome the anger & hurt  
Forgiveness makes the choice to ERASE the offense

## 2. Receive God's Grace to Forgive

- No one said this would be easy. / We need God's help.

The Best Motivator for forgiving others comes when we reflect on God's forgiveness towards us.

Psalm 86:5 For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all who call upon You.

We pray these words in the Lords' Prayer.

Matthew 6:12 We ask God to,  
 "Forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors [letting go of both the wrong and the resentment]."

About the time we may think that someone doesn't "*deserve our forgiveness*" - Remember: we didn't deserve God's forgiveness.

## 3. Make the Choice to Forgive

Ephesians 4:32

Be kind and helpful to one another, tender-hearted [compassionate, understanding], forgiving one another [readily and freely], just as God in Christ also forgave you.

Forgiving someone (readily & feely) means we choose to forgive:

- even if - We don't feel like it
- even if - They "don't deserve it"
- even if - They are not asking
- even if - They don't know it

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*Forgiveness is something you do inside your soul and does not require anything from the other person.*

- Henry Cloud

Forgive them in your heart & in your prayers to God.

- It's key to articulate your forgiveness.

Forgiveness is for me – not them.

- Whether they know it or not – isn't the point.

- I forgive - so that I can be "finished" with the transgression
- I forgive - so that the offense no longer Has a Place in my life
- I forgive - to be free & unlock my future!

Do I have to TRUST them again?

Forgiveness does not mean you will trust the person going forward.

- Trust is Not Free – it is a privilege that is earned

#### 4. Forgiveness is a Process

It requires that we make the choice - Repeatedly.

Matthew 18:21-22 Peter asked the Lord,  
"How many times are we to forgive someone who does something wrong to me? Is seven times enough?" Jesus answered, "Not just 7 times, but 77 times!"

≥ The point is Unlimited Forgiveness.

Forgiveness is a way of life we choose - It's not a "One & Done".

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"It isn't enough to forgive today and then return to the offense tomorrow."  
- RT Kendall, Total Forgiveness

You will know you are "Getting There" when:

- You can pray that God would deal with them as He deals with you
- The Real Test: You pray that God bless them (and REALLY mean it)!

Will you use the Key of Forgiveness to unlock your future?

CLOSE: Corrie Ten Boone

<picture 3>

- a Jewish sympathizer had to answer this question.

{slide 5}

~~When you remain angry, you are just a character in someone else's story.  
When you let go and forgive, you are free to write your own story.~~

- Henry Cloud

~~What's Your Story going to be?~~

YES