

Rom 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

When we give up our right to judge and punish our offender then we are declaring our trust in God.

Forgiving Self

Difficulty in forgiving ourselves usually occurs because we do not truly believe that we are forgiven by God. Somehow, we feel our sin is beyond his ability to forgive. Instead, He has freed us from all condemnation... ***Rom 8:1-2** There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

CONCLUSION:

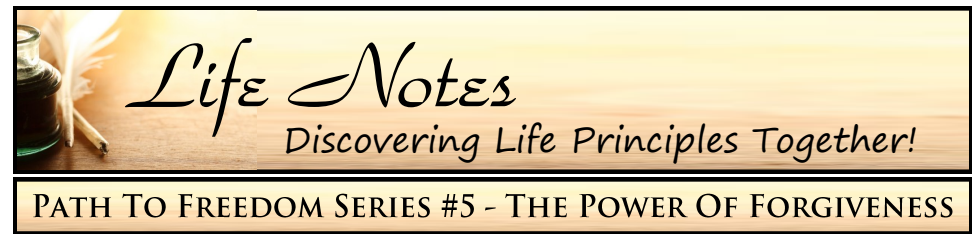
Anger and bitterness must be dealt with in our lives. If not, then we will have an unforgiving spirit which will eventually destroy our soul. The practice of forgiving is a powerful tool that God has given us. When we forgive others then God can forgive us and He gives us this promise...

***Isa 61:3** To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.*

LIFE NOTES ANSWER KEY

Forgiveness Is Not:

- ◆ Approval
- ◆ Excusing
- ◆ Justifying
- ◆ Pardoning
- ◆ Reconciliation
- ◆ Denying
- ◆ Blindness
- ◆ Forgetting
- ◆ Refusing
- ◆ Pretending



ICE BREAKER:

What is the most irritating thing that you can think of? For example, one



of the most irritating thing that I can think of is the sound of fingernails running across a chalkboard...



It makes me want to scream!

INTRODUCTION:

People handle anger and bitterness in different ways. Some people will lash out, avoid, run from, or hold anger and bitterness inside until their whole life becomes negative and dark. God's remedy for anger and bitterness is to forgive... it's the start of a healing process for us. We can try to avoid the person who harmed us, or lash out at others, or hold it inside but these methods for dealing with anger and bitterness are not really effective. Running from the problem by leaving a job, city, family, or church is a futile attempt in dealing with unforgiveness. We need the freedom that can only be found through the practice of honestly forgiving others. That's why God has given us the powerful tool of forgiveness!

KEY SCRIPTURE

***Matthew 6:14-15** For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: (15) But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

DEFINITIONS:

Anger is a strong feeling of intense displeasure, hostility, or indignation as a result of real or imagined threat, insult, frustration, or injustice toward yourself or others important to you.

Forgiveness is giving up resentment or anger against someone or something. It is giving up your right of revenge, reciprocation, or compensation. It is the excusing of a debt you feel is owed to you.

Un-forgiveness is the unwillingness to forgive, it is a willful refusal to give up one's resentment, grudge, or bitterness.

FORGIVENESS IS NOT (R. T. Kendall's book, Total forgiveness, pps. 19-25)

- ♦ A_____ of what they did
- ♦ E_____ what they did
- ♦ J_____ what they did
- ♦ P_____ what they did
- ♦ R_____
- ♦ D_____ what they did
- ♦ B_____ to what they did
- ♦ F_____
- ♦ R_____ to take the wrong seriously
- ♦ P_____ we are not hurt

OBSTACLES TO FORGIVENESS

Denial - People will hide, run, and avoid their hurt and pain as a safety mechanism from further hurt. However, there comes the time we must acknowledge how we have been hurt and abused. Healing does not come when our pain is repressed or trivialized.

***John 8:32, 36** And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free... If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

Unresolved Anger

***Ephesians 4:26** "In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold."*

To experience anger is not sin, it only becomes sin when we allow it to embitter or control us. Righteous anger, that enables us to stand against

injustice, is a God-given emotion. However, "unresolved anger" is anger that never gets settled which builds into resentment which builds into bitterness which can not only harm us but others too...

***Heb 12:15** Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*

Instead, we must practice kindness, love, and forgiveness...

***Eph 4:31-32** Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice: (32) and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.*

Blaming

It is natural for us to blame someone or something for our hurts and pain. Oftentimes, we will blame God for not intervening or keeping us from painful situations. God is not the problem for He is just and perfect... ***Deut 32:3-4** Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. (4) He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.*

Discuss: Why do we blame others for our hurts, pain, or failures?

Ultimately, blaming God or others will only prolong our hurt and pain. If we are going to heal we must choose to forgive.

Vengeance

People frequently find forgiveness more difficult because they believe the abuser deserves to suffer or be punished. In the cross we find the place that Jesus has already been punished for our sins, and theirs. We must choose to leave them to our God who judges fairly...

***1 Peter 2:23** Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:*