

Evangelizing Those Who Wrong You

Session #1

- **evangelize.** (1) to preach the gospel, (2) to impart the gospel to others through word and deed, (3) to be a living embodiment of the gospel in relationship with others.

1 Thessalonians 1:5. “For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.”

- Importance of forgiveness
- Unforgiveness: Problem #1

Two words for ‘forgive’ in the NT . . .

- afihmi. “send away”(Matthew 6:12. “forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”)

Object: _____

Object: _____

Matthew 18:30. “...he threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed.”

- karizomai. “grace” (Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13)

-- _____

-- _____
-- _____

forgive. (a) to send away sin from between you and the one who sinned against you and to hold that sin against the offender no more; (b) to release (“send away”) the offender from the consequences they deserve from you as a result of the sins they have committed against you; and (c) to positively favor them with blessings they do not deserve.

“How Do I Get to the Place of Forgiveness?”

4 Steps

...of forgiveness

Step #1: Go to the _____, and do some _____ thinking.

R.C. Ryle. “A spiteful quarrelsome Christian is a scandal It is doubtful that such a one has sat at the foot of the cross . . .”¹

John Bunyan. “Then [Christian] he stood awhile to look and wonder, for he was very surprised that the sight of the cross should ease him of his burden in such a way. He looked, therefore, and looked again, even until the spring in his head sent their waters flowing down his cheeks.”²

A. Thought #1: “Christ has _____ as I am suffering right now, and infinitely more so, which means I am never _____ in any _____.”

¹ <https://www.unlockingthebible.org/marks-of-a-truly-forgiven-person/>

² John Bunyan. Pilgrim’s Progress.

1. Isaiah 53. “(3) . . . a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief . . . (4) Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried.”
2. Mark 15:23. “And they tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh; but He did not take it.”
3. Romans 8:17. Lit. “[we are] . . . fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed WE suffer together [sumpaskw], in order that WE might also be glorified together.”
 - John Stott. “It is wonderful that we may share in Christ’s sufferings; it is more wonderful still that he shares in ours.”³
 - “...the Lord Jesus Christ is joint-heir with us . . . of the sufferings through which we are called to go at the present time. The unsaved do not have any fellowship in their sufferings; we do.” (*Barnhouse*)
4. Hebrews 4:15. “We do not have a high priest who cannot **sympathize** [lit. “suffer with” = Gr. sumpaqew] with our weaknesses”
5. Matthew 25:45. “Then He will answer them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’”
6. Acts 9. ““(4) . . . Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’ (5) . . . ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.’”
7. Example of John Perkins: “The Spirit of God worked on me as I lay in that bed. An image formed in my mind. The image of the cross – Christ on the cross. It blotted out everything else in my mind. This Jesus knew what I had suffered. He understood. And He cared. Because He had experienced it all Himself. This Jesus, this One who had brought good news directly from God in heaven, had lived what He preached. Yet He was arrested and falsely accused. Like me, He went through an unjust trial. He also faced a lynch mob and got beaten. But even more than that, He was nailed to rough wooden planks and killed. Killed like a common criminal. At the crucial moment, it seemed to Jesus that even God Himself had deserted Him. The suffering was so great, He cried out in agony. He was dying.

³ John Stott, The Cross of Christ, 335.

“But when He looked at that mob who had lynched Him, He didn’t hate them. He loved them. He forgave them. And He prayed God to forgive them, ‘Father, forgive these people, for they don’t know what they are doing.’ His enemies hated. But Jesus forgave. I couldn’t get away from that It’s a profound, mysterious truth – Jesus’ concept of love overpowering hate. I may not see its victory in my lifetime. But I know it’s true. I know it’s true, because it happened to me. On that bed, full of bruises and stitches – God made it true to me. He washed my hatred away and replaced it with a love for the white man in rural Mississippi. I felt strong again. Stronger than ever. What doesn’t destroy me will make me stronger. I know it’s true. Because it happened to me.”⁴

8. From John Stott: “I myself could never believe in God were it not for the cross. . . . In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it? I have entered many Buddhist temples in different Asian countries and stood respectfully before the statue of the Buddha, his legs crossed, arms folded, eyes closed, the ghost of a smile plays round his mouth, a remote look on his face, detached from the agonies of the world.

“But each time, after a while I have had to look away. And in imagination I have turned instead to the lonely, twisted, tortured figure on the cross, nails through hands and feet, back lacerated, limbs wrenched, brow bleeding from thorn pricks, mouth dry and intolerably thirsty, plunged into God-forsaken darkness. That is the God for me!

“He laid aside His immunity to pain. He entered our world of flesh and blood, tears and death. He suffered for us. Our sufferings become more manageable in the light of His. There is still a question mark against human suffering, but over it we boldly stamp another mark, the cross which symbolizes divine suffering.”⁵

9. Edward Shillito, “Jesus of the Scars”:

*The other gods were strong, but thou wast weak;
They rode, but thou didst stumble to a throne;
But to our wounds only God’s wounds can speak,
And not a god has wounds but thou alone.*

⁴ From John Perkins, quoted in Colossians & Philemon: The Supremacy of Christ, R. Kent Hughes.

⁵ John Stott, The Cross of Christ, 335.

**B. Thought #2: “Sometimes God purposes that those whom He _____
deeply be _____ against.”**

1. Matt. 3:17. “...This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”
2. Acts 2:23. “this man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men...”
3. Acts 4. “(27) For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, (28) to do whatever Your hand and your purpose predestined to occur.”
4. From When God Weeps: Why Our Sufferings Matter to the Almighty, Joni Eareckson & Steven Estes, 53-54): “But these pains are a mere warm-up to his other and growing dread. He begins to feel a foreign sensation. Somewhere during this day an unearthly foul odor began to waft, not around his nose, but his heart. He feels dirty. Human wickedness starts to crawl upon his spotless being-the living excrement from our souls. The apple of his Father's eye turns brown with rot.

“His Father! He must face his Father like this!

“From heaven the Father now rouses himself like a lion disturbed, shakes his mane, and roars against the shriveling remnant of a man hanging on a cross. Never has the Son seen the Father look at him so, never felt even the least of his hot breath. But the roar shakes the unseen world and darkens the visible sky. The Son does not recognize these eyes.

"Son of Man! Why have you behaved so? You have cheated, lusted, stolen, gossiped, murdered, envied, hated, lied. You have cursed, robbed, overspent, overeaten, fornicating, disobeyed, embezzled, and blasphemed. Oh, the duties you have shirked, the children you have abandoned! Who has ever so ignored the poor, so played the coward, so belittled my name? Have you ever held your razor tongue? What a self-righteous, pitiful drunk -- you, who molest young boys, peddle killer drugs, travel in cliques, and mock your parents.

“Who gave you the boldness to rig elections, spur revolutions, torture animals, and worship demons? Does the list never end! Splitting families, raping virgins, acting smugly, playing the pimp, buying politicians, practicing extortion, filming pornography, accepting bribes.

You have burned down buildings, perfected terrorist tactics, founded false religions, traded in slaves, relishing each morsel and bragging about it all. I hate, I loathe these things in you! Disgust for everything about you consumes me! Can you not feel my wrath?”

“Of course, the Son is innocent. He is blamelessness itself. The Father knows this. But the divine pair have an agreement, and the unthinkable must now take place. Jesus will be treated as if personally responsible for every sin ever committed.

“The Father watches as his heart's treasure, the mirror-image of himself, sinks drowning in to raw, liquid sin. Jehovah's stored rage against humankind from every century explodes in a single direction.

“My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?!”

“But heaven stops its ears. The Son stares up at the One who cannot, who will not, reach down or reply.

“The Trinity had planned it. The Son endured it. The Spirit enabled him. The Father rejected the Son whom he loved. Jesus, the God-man from Nazareth, perished. The Father accepted his sacrifice for sin and was satisfied. The Rescue was accomplished.

“God set down his saw.

“This is who asks us to trust him when he calls on us to suffer.”

C. Thought #3: “God the Father can be _____ completely on the receiving end of any wrongdoing.”

1. 1 Peter 2. “(23) while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but He kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; (24) and He bore our sins in His body on the cross...”
2. Luke 23:46. “And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into Your hands I **commit** My spirit.’ Having said this, He breathed His last.”
3. Philippians 2. “(6) . . . [Christ] did not regard equality with God a thing to clutch onto, (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. (8) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (9) For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him a name which is above every name, (10) so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, (11) and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

4. Ephesians 1. “(20) . . . He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, (21) far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. (22) And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church”

Evangelizing Those Who Wrong You

Session #2

“How Do I Get to the Place of Forgiveness?”

4 Steps

...of forgiveness

Step #1: Go to the cross, and do some gospel thinking.

- A. Thought #1: “Christ has suffered as I am suffering right now, and infinitely more so, which means I am never alone in any pain.”**
- B. Thought #2: “Sometimes God purposes that those whom He loves deeply be painfully sinned against.”**
- C. Thought #3: “God the Father can be trusted completely on the receiving end of any wrongdoing.”**
- D. Thought #4: “I have committed greater _____ against _____ than any person has ever committed against _____.”**
 - 1. Rebecca Manley Pippert. “Dust, rusty nails and blood notwithstanding, the ground at the foot of the cross is the only vantage point from which to view life clearly. To see things there is to see them truly.”⁶
 - 2. What comes naturally to us all: “. . . you [are] looking at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but are not noticing the log that is in your own eye?” (Matthew 7:3)

⁶ Rebecca Manley Pippert, Hope Has Its Reasons, 172.

3. What can possibly reverse this natural focus and make us more concerned about our own sin than someone else's? THE _____!

*“You who think of sin but lightly
Nor suppose the evil great
Here may view its nature rightly
Here its guilt may estimate.”
(Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted)*

4. John Stott. “Until you see the cross as that which is done by you, you will never appreciate that it is done for you.”⁷
5. Isaiah 53:5. “But He was pierced through **from** [Heb. *min*] our transgressions, He was crushed **from** [Heb. *min*]⁸ our iniquities.”

This makes us violators of the 6th Commandment: “Thou Shalt Not Kill.”

6. What the Cross shows us is that if God came into the world and presented Himself to us, we would kill God. God sent His Son into the world to speak the truth and to be the truth. To have seen Jesus when He was on this earth was to see the Father. And what did we do to God when He came? We killed Him. In this act, sin overplayed its hand and showed itself for what it really is. We overplayed our hand and exposed ourselves for what we really are . . . we are murderers, murderers of God.
- A) Romans 8:7. “because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it is not subject to the Law of God, nor is it able to do so.”
- B) 1 John 3:15. “Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer”

⁷ John Stott, <https://twitter.com/JohnStott>.

⁸ In verse 4 Isaiah voices the viewers' initial estimation that the Messiah was stricken, smitten, and afflicted of [by] God. The “but” at the beginning of verse 5 points to the additional and contrasting fact that the Messiah was also “pierced from our iniquities and crushed from our sins.” The double use of min [from] in v. 5 denotes *causation* with the overlapping notion of *means*. We see a similar use of min in Genesis 9:11: “All flesh shall not again be cut off **by** [**Heb. min**] the waters of the flood.” Hence, verse 5 teaches us that, we, the very ones who esteemed the Messiah to be stricken of God, are complicit in His suffering through our sin.

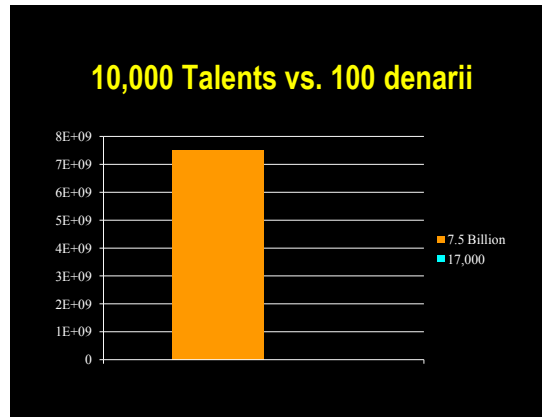
- C) John 15. “(23) He who hates Me hates My Father also. (24) If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well. (25) But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’”
- D) 2 Samuel 12. “(9) Why have you **despised** the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight? (10) . . . you have **despised** Me and taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife?”
7. Charles Spurgeon. “***Sin is a deicide. Every sinner, if he could, would kill God,*** for he says in his heart, ‘No God.’ He means he wishes there were none. He would be rejoiced indeed if he could learn for certain that there was no God. In fact, that is the bugbear of his life, that there is a God, and a just God, who will bring him into judgment. His secret wish is that there were no religion and no God, for he might then live as he pleased. Now, when a man is made to see that ***sin in its essence is the murderer of Emmanuel***, God with us, his heart being renewed, he hates sin from that very moment.”⁹

E. **Thought #5: “Glory to God, Christ has purchased my _____ and _____ at the cross.”**

1. Ephesians 1:7. “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses,”
2. Romans 5:9. “having now been justified by His blood”

A Definition: “Justification is an instantaneous legal act of God in which He, (1) decides to think of our sins as forgiven and Christ’s righteousness as belonging to us, and (2) declares us to be righteous in His sight.” (Wayne Grudem)
3. Matthew 18:32. “I forgave you ALL THAT DEBT....”

⁹ Charles Spurgeon, The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit: Sermons Preached and Revised, Volume 21, 344.



- 100,000 Talents = your sins against God which God has forgiven
- 100 Denarii = the sins of others against you which you find _____



4. **From Cindy.** “Over time, I began to see my own sinfulness and God’s grace and mercy for my sins. It was very hard to look at my own contribution to the breakdown of my marriage. I wanted to just focus on his part and leave the blame there, but God opened my eyes and helped me to see that, even as a victim of my husband’s sin I could not claim innocence in my marriage, and certainly not before a holy God.”

“The gospel gave me power to forgive my husband. Christ had died for both our sins, dying in our place and drinking the full cup of God’s wrath

we deserved for our sins. Through the revelation of this truth, I was humbled and disarmed – we were more alike than different. From this standing place, forgiveness flowed.”¹⁰

F. Thought #6: “I am purchased & _____ by _____; and now I live to serve _____ purposes, not _____.”

1. In purchasing me, Christ took ownership of me, an ownership which includes even debts owed to me. (Matthew 18; Matthew 25:45)

Romans 12. “(19) Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord.”

2. 1 Corinthians 6:20. “(19) . . . you are not your own . . . (20) For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”
3. Evaluate the things that make you angry. Are you righteously indignant because sin is being committed, or are you angry because someone has done something that is at cross purposes with your selfish agenda?

¹⁰ Dave Harvey, When Sinners Say ‘I Do’, 109.

Evangelizing Those Who Wrong You

Session #3

4 Steps

...of forgiveness

Step #1: Go to the cross, and do some gospel thinking.

- A. **Thought #1:** “Christ has suffered as I am suffering right now, and infinitely more so, which means I am never alone in any pain.”
- B. **Thought #2:** “Sometimes God purposes that those whom He loves deeply be painfully sinned against.”
- C. **Thought #3:** “God the Father can be trusted completely on the receiving end of any wrongdoing.”
- D. **Thought #4:** “I have committed greater sins against God than any person has ever committed against me.”
- E. **Thought #5:** “Glory to God, Christ has purchased my forgiveness and justification at the cross.”
- F. **Thought #6:** “I am purchased & owned by God; and now I live to serve His purposes, not mine.”

- E. **Thought #7:** Forgiveness is _____; forgiveness is _____; forgiveness is _____.

1. Why couldn't God have just forgiven the world of its sins? Why did He have to get nailed to a cross and bleed and die in order to forgive us of our sins?

2. Timothy Keller. “Everyone who forgives . . . goes through a death . . . and experiences nails, blood, sweat, and tears. . . . Forgiveness is costly suffering . . . forgiveness . . . at first always feels far worse than bitterness. . . . Forgiveness means refusing to make them pay for what they did. However, to refrain from lashing out at someone when you

want to do so with all your being is agony. It is a form of suffering. You not only suffer the original loss of happiness, reputation, and opportunity, but now you forgo the consolation of inflicting the same on them. You are absorbing the debt, taking the cost of it completely on yourself instead of taking it out on the other person. It hurts terribly. Many people would say it feels like a kind of death.”¹¹

3. Ken Sande. “Forgiveness can be a costly activity. When you cancel a debt, it does not just simply disappear. Instead, you absorb the liability that someone else deserves to pay. Similarly, forgiveness requires that you absorb certain effects of the other person’s sins and you release that person from liability to punishment. This is precisely what Christ accomplished on Calvary.”¹²

4. What God is looking for: Just one person willing to _____.

The problem with our “good deeds” in relationships (especially where there is some measure of conflict):

“I wanted to serve, yes, because . . . then I would always have the high moral ground.”¹³

G. Thought #8: Death isn’t so _____ after all. Actually, it is the beginning of _____.

1. John 12:24. “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”
2. Philippians 3:10. “that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.”
3. From A Gospel Primer for Christians: “Thankfully, the gospel teaches me that dying is not an end, but a beginning. For after Christ took up His cross and died,

¹¹ Timothy Keller, The Reason for God.

¹² Ken Sande, The Peacemaker.

¹³ Timothy Keller, The Meaning of Marriage, 55.

God raised Him from the dead,¹⁴ exalted Him to the highest heaven,¹⁵ and drew Him into His bosom.¹⁶ These facts surrounding Christ's resurrection stand as proof positive that God will not leave me for dead, but will raise me similarly, if I would only allow myself to die. Indeed, on the other side of each layer of dying lie experiences of a life with God that are far richer, far higher, and far more intimate than anything I would have otherwise known.¹⁷

“In God's economy, death is the way to life. *“Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it,”* Jesus says, *“but whoever loses His life for My sake, he shall find it.”*¹⁸ Indeed, the more conformable I am made to the death of Christ, the more I experience freedom from sin¹⁹ and taste the power of the resurrection of Jesus Himself.²⁰ The path to such power is paved with many dyings, and each stage of resurrection is achieved with each incident of dying to myself and reckoning myself dead to sin.²¹

¹⁴Ephesians 1:20. “. . . He raised Him from the dead . . .”

¹⁵Philippians 2. “(8) . . . He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (9) For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,”

¹⁶John 1:18. “No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is [*present tense*] in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”

¹⁷Romans 6:4. “Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.”

¹⁸Luke 9:24. “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.”

¹⁹Romans 6. “(6) knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; (7) for he who has died is freed from sin.”

²⁰Philippians 3:10. “(8) . . . I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ . . . (10) that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;”

²¹Romans 6:11. “Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”

“The more I contemplate the gospel, the more I understand that this “*word of the cross*”²² stands as a blueprint for my own life story. The death that Christ died is the death to which I also am called, and the death to which I am called is my entry point to union with Christ and life at its fullest.²³ So, come what may, I’ll let no one take this death from me!”

----- **A Word of Caution** -----

The Idea of “Getting to the Place of Forgiveness” Can Be Misused

In her book, Choosing Forgiveness, Nancy Leigh DeMoss talks about one of the myths of forgiveness. She explains:

“There’s a . . . myth that keeps many people from experiencing the reality and blessings of forgiveness in their lives—*that forgiveness requires a long, drawn-out process*

“I’ve heard people say, ‘I’m moving toward forgiveness,’ . . . — sometimes even after years of counseling and therapy. There’s no question that for some people, coming to grips with the awful offenses they’ve been forced to endure can be a long and arduous journey. The road just to get to the place where forgiveness is barely palatable is often a story in itself.

“But I’ll just say this from experience: I’ve watched believers ‘working their way’ toward forgiveness for years and years and never getting there. In fact, I might even go so far as to say that when forgiveness is seen primarily as a work in progress, it seldom becomes a work in practice.

“The choice to forgive does not have to involve a long, extended process—any more than God’s forgiveness of us is a slow-moving, wait-and-see, not-till-I’m-good-and-ready series of events and checkpoints.”

“. . . by God’s grace, you can choose to forgive in a moment of time, to the level of your understanding at that point. And though much more may be required of you down the line, the reality of being released

²²**1 Corinthians 1:18.** “For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”

²³**Romans 6:5.** “For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection”

from the prison of your own unforgiveness can happen today. This moment.”

Step #2: Choose to _____.

A. We should choose to forgive in the context of _____.

1. Luke 11:4. “(in the Lord’s Prayer) . . . as we ourselves . . . forgive everyone who is indebted to us.”
2. Mark 11:25. “Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone.”
3. Matthew 6:12. “...we forgive our debtors...”

B. We should choose to forgive others in a way that is shaped by _____ forgiveness of us.

Ephesians 4:32-5:1. “Forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.”

C. We should choose to forgive others as a means of shaping our own experience of God’s _____ of us.

1. Luke 11:4. “. . . forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.”
2. Matthew 6. “(12) And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. . . . (14) For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. (15) But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.”
3. Nancy Leigh DeMoss. “The Scripture affirms what our own experience confirms—a clear connection between our willingness to extend forgiveness to

others, and our ability to appropriate and experience His forgiveness for our sins.”²⁴

“If we hold fast to an unforgiving spirit, we will not be forgiven by God. If we continue on in that way, then we will not go to heaven, because heaven is the dwelling place of forgiving people.”²⁵

D. We should choose to forgive with _____. *“we ourselves also are forgiving everyone who is indebted to us.” (Luke 11:4)*

1. *“we ourselves”*
2. *“everyone”*
3. *“who is indebted to us”*
4. *“we forgive”*
5. *“When you pray, say...”*

E. Summing Up:

1. State (to God) the _____ & the _____.
2. Express the _____ and damage the offense has caused.

1 Peter 5. “(7) casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. . . . (9) . . . knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.” (*read the Psalm 22:6-18*)

3. Confess the _____ they owe to you and the justice you would love to visit upon them.
4. Officially state your _____ of the offender. Say something to this effect: *“As a sinner myself who has been forgiven of far worse sins against You, I forgive this person for what they have done. I will bear their debt and will absorb in my own person the wrath that they deserve from me.”*

²⁴ Nancy Leigh DeMoss, Choosing Forgiveness, 70.

²⁵ Choosing Forgiveness, 69.

Evangelizing Those Who Wrong You,

Session #4

Step #1: Go to the Cross and do some gospel thinking.

Step #2: Choose to forgive.

- A. We should choose to forgive in the context of prayer.**
- B. We should choose to forgive others in a way that is shaped by God’s forgiveness of us.**
- C. We should choose to forgive others as a means of shaping our own experience of God’s forgiveness of us.**
- D. We should choose to forgive with persistency.**
- E. We should choose to forgive others as a sacrificial _____ of ourselves to God.**

- Ephesians. “(4:32) Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has forgiven you. (5:1) Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, (2) and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”

F. We should choose to forgive _____.

1. Ephesians 4:32. “be continuously forgiving each other.”
2. Matthew 18. “(21) Then Peter came and said to Him, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?’ (22) Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.’”
 - A) “How often shall my brother sin against me?”
 - B) “How often shall I forgive him?”
3. When we forgive someone, we should not say in our hearts, “I forgive them for this now, but this is the last time.” Instead, true forgiveness says, “I forgive you for this now – and if you were to do this 489 more times, I would forgive you that many times if needed.”

4. Impossible? Crazy?
5. A common question: “I forgave a person of their sin against me, and then five minutes later I found myself angry again, so I guess this forgiveness thing isn’t working. What do I do now?”
6. Another question: “I forgave someone of a sin against me, but now I find myself angry again. Does that mean that I never really truly forgave in the first place? Was my previous forgiveness just a sham?”
 - A) It might mean your forgiveness was not _____.
 - B) It doesn’t necessarily mean that your forgiveness was insincere. It may simply mean that you _____ your _____.
 - C) Consider that some sins committed against you are multi-faceted in their _____ (the way they were carried out) and in their _____, thus requiring multiple moments of forgiveness.
 - 1) When Jesus tells us to forgive 490 times, He is not simply telling us that we need to forgive 490 separate individual sins one time each. *He is also saying that sometimes we will find ourselves needing to forgive one sin 490 times.* A sin with 490 facets will eventually require 490 moments of forgiveness.
 - 2) _____, the ultimate multi-faceted sin.

Step #3: _____ for the person who has wronged you.

- A. Matthew 5. “(43) You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ (44) But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, (45) so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to shine on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.”
- B. 1 John 2:1. “My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;”

- C. Luke 23:34. But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."

Step #4: Make _____ an agent of blessing in that person's life.

- A. Romans 12. "(17) Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. (18) If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. (19) Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. '(20) But if your enemy is hungry, you be feeding him, and if he is thirsty, you be giving him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.' (21) Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (see also Romans 2:4)
- B. 1 Peter 3. "(8) To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; (9) not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing."
- C. Be willing to render kindness _____.

A Practical Question:

The Relationship Between Forgiveness & Trust

"What is the relationship between forgiveness and trust.

Does forgiveness equal trust?"

1. _____. In fact, trust prematurely granted is _____.

1 Timothy 3:6. “And not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation and snare of the devil.”

2. _____ . Forgiveness means that you give the offender the opportunity to _____ your trust (which requires making yourself _____).

“Kindness says to our spouse, ‘I know you are a sinner like me and you will sin against me, just like I sin against you. But I refuse to live defensively with you. I’m going to live *leaning in your direction* with a merciful posture that your sin and weakness cannot erase.’” (from *When Sinners Say ‘I Do’* by Dave Harvey)

3. But doesn’t the Bible say that “Love believes all things”?

2 Timothy 2:2. “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

Acts 6:3. “Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.”

1 Timothy 3:6. “And not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation and snare of the devil.”

1 Corinthians 13. “(7) [Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (8) Love never fails”

4. This is way _____ treats you in _____.

A. Ephesians 1:1 & Colossians 1:2 refer to believers as “faithful ones.”

B. Ephesians 4:30. “Grieve not the Holy Spirit...”

5. The alternative is an unbreakable and unredeemable _____.

"Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be vulnerable. . . . the only place outside Heaven where you can be perfectly safe from all the dangers and perturbations of love is Hell."²⁶

²⁶ C.S. Lewis, The Four Loves, 169.