



The Lost Art of Asking for Forgiveness

Lesson Nine

The Four Fundamentals of Forgiveness

The Biblical Basis for Being Set Free and Setting Others Free in Christ



- **Receiving Forgiveness** from God is the FOUNDATION/SOURCE for recovering the lost art of forgiveness.
- **Being Forgiving** toward others is the HEART of recovering the lost art of forgiveness.
 - Being forgiving in your heart GIVES INTEGRITY to our asking and giving forgiveness to one another.
 - Being forgiving BRIDGES THE GAP between receiving forgiveness from God and asking/giving forgiveness to others.

Recovering the Lost Art of Asking for Forgiveness

"Every healthy relationship is made up of two good forgivers." – Ruth Graham

1. Why Do I Need to Ask for Forgiveness?

- To be set free from THE DEBT you owe to that person. *Matthew 18:26-27*
- To be set free to WORSHIP GOD without His chastisement. *Matthew 5:23-26; 1Corinthians 11:17-31; Psalm 51:16-17*

2. When Do I Ask for Forgiveness?

- As soon as you are personally CONVICTED or CONSCIOUS of the offense.
 - 1) Before going to BED! *Ephesians 4:26-27*
 - 2) Before going to GOD! *Matthew 5:23-24*
 - 3) Before DOING anything else! "GO; FIRST be reconciled to your brother, and THEN..."
- As soon as you are personally CONFRONTED about a "legitimate" offense. *Matthew 18:15; Luke 17:3*

3. How Do I Ask for Forgiveness?

- Don't use "the world's easy substitute" for biblical forgiveness: The APOLOGY!

Apology = *apologia* = a **DEFENSE** made at a court trial in ancient Greece!

"I'm sorry, if...but...maybe..."

- 1) The offender has **only** expressed how he or she **FEELS**.
- 2) The offender has **not CONFESSED** the wrong.
- 3) The offender has **not ASKED** for his guilt to be lifted.
- 4) The offender has **not PROMISED** to never remember the offense.
- 5) The offender has **been PRESSURED** to minimize—or —condone the offense.

➤ Do make a biblical **REQUEST** for forgiveness!

"I have sinned by (name the offense), will you forgive me?"

- 1) The offender has taken **RESPONSIBILITY** for his actions or attitude.
- 2) The offender has **CONFESSED** his sin.
- 3) The offender has implied a decision to **REPENT** of the sin.
- 4) The offender has humbly recognized his **INDEBTEDNESS** to the one he/she offended.
- 5) The offender has been faced with the **RESPONSIBILITY** to release the offender and make the promise.

The Goal Is for Our Words to Match Our Heart...

*By identifying the offense,
By taking full responsibility for the offense,
By reflecting sincere repentance and humility,
By requesting the gift of forgiveness.*

Evaluate These Examples of "Wimping Out" and Possibly Missing Out on Forgiveness

- "I was wrong, but so were you." _____
- "I'm sorry about it, but it wasn't really my fault." _____
- "I apologize." _____
- "If I hurt you, I'm sorry." _____
- "If I've been wrong, please forgive me." _____
- "I'm sorry about what happened, will you forgive me?" _____

➤ Pray over and apply **The Eight A's of Asking for Forgiveness.**

Adapted from The Seven A's of Confession by Ken Sande

The "Eight A's of Asking" Will Help Our Words Match Our Heart of Repentance

- 1) **ADDRESS** everyone involved.
- 2) **AVOID** "if," "but," and "maybe."
- 3) **ADMIT** specifically.
- 4) **ACKNOWLEDGE** their hurt.
- 5) **ACCEPT** consequences.
- 6) **ALIGN** your heart to alter your behavior.
 - I have a plan to **align** my heart and my behavior (thought, word, deed) with the Lord and His gospel.
 - I have a plan to **alter** the pattern of my life so I sin less and less in this.
 - I have a plan to have an **ally** in aligning my heart and altering my life.
- 7) **ASK** for forgiveness and allow time.
- 8) **ACCEPT** their forgiveness with a thankful heart.

Receive the Gift That Keeps on Giving

*Go and ask for forgiveness as soon as possible with a heart that has already been forgiven by the Lord.
Then pay it forward by giving to others what you have so freely received from the Lord and others.*