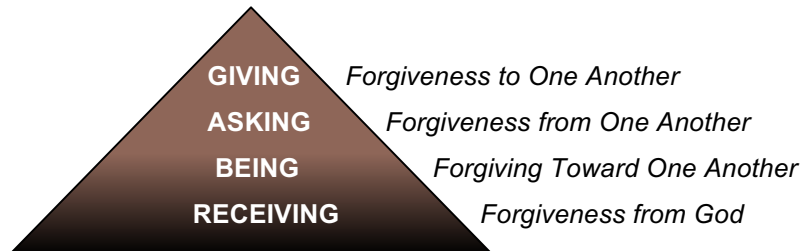


# The Lost Art of Asking for Forgiveness

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.*