

- 1 **Codependent workshop**
Chapter 9: Offering the gift of forgiveness
- 2 **Pathways of Healing**
 - God has prescribed methods of dealing with inner damage of our soul
 - Our job is to agree with His ways, and be willing to align our hearts
 - We do not own the remedy – He does
 - Forgiveness is the cure to anything that breaks us internally. Often, we don't understand the tremendous ramifications of the transaction of true forgiveness
 - We furthermore don't understand what true and authentic forgiveness entails
- 3 **Offering Forgiveness**
 - God doesn't ask us to forgive or accept anything wrongful done against us.
 - God hates the sin that has hurt and violated us even more than we do
 - He does ask that we allow Him to deal with it through His redemptive principles
- 4 **The Threat of Unforgiveness**
 - While the violation and wrongful deeds done against may seem to be threat, in truth, it's how we deal with those long-term that will determine the end result
 - That's because the cross defeated the power of sin. That doesn't mean sin can be horribly damaging, but it simply means that Jesus somehow, someway is above it
- 5 **Why is Unforgiveness Harmful?**
 - Anger, bitterness and resentment can become coping mechanisms – it gives us a hardened heart where we no longer have to be vulnerable to pain. But like a substance problem, it has toxic effects
 - The residue of the sins imposed on us contaminates our own heart and life at all levels
 - As the bitterness holds us in chains – it causes us to not trust relationships and people in general – people have power over us – we cannot grieve, heal or move into healthy relationship – our reference point to life becomes that of a “victim.”
- 6 **What is Unforgiveness Harmful?**
 - God warns us through unforgiving servant parable that a lack of forgiveness will lead to our own torment
 - Lack of forgiveness places us in a spiritual crisis because the Word of God states that if you do not forgive, God cannot forgive you. This means guilt, shame and condemnation will be experienced.
 - *But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.* – Matthew 6:15
- 7 **A Bitter Spirit – Spiritual Cancer**
 - If we don't deal with unforgiveness, we can develop an overall negative, bitter spirit where we perceive everything through faulty filters – perceiving violations when they don't necessarily exist (victim cycle).
 - We may continually see ourselves as deserving more and never being treated “good enough” – this is because the old wound still speaks into our life above and beyond the reality of what is occurring in the here and now.
 - Bitterness must be seen as a disease – it will literally destroy a person – no limit to where it can take us emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually.
- 8 **Forgiving our parents/ancestors**
 - We should be especially focused on family of origin sins, beginning with our parental experience

- The sins of our parents are often passed onto us (generational sins). We can remove the power of them through forgiveness.
- The sins of our parents (through violation or neglect) cause the deepest of wounds and the most significant issues with trust. If a proper bond of trust wasn't established at a parental level, we won't be able to offer it in future relationships.

9 **When We Don't Want to Forgive**

- We need the perspective of God's heart – not our own heart - God's system is in contrary to our own
- We must come to understand that forgiveness isn't about merely releasing that person from a debt, it's about being released from them where we ourselves can be set free
- Forgiveness removes the dirt and infection of the wound, thus allows for a healing to occur.
- We CANNOT heal when that wound has been covered by unforgiveness – the sin will continue to fester

10 **Preparing to Forgive**

- We must first remember that we ourselves were once violators in His eyes and He bestowed grace on us.
- We must understand that God was not "okay" with the way people violated us – the violations were awful. We need to see His grief and pain over the way people hurt us. He hated it too!
- We must be willing to call "sin, sin". But we must be prepared to separate people from the sinners – recognizing, like Jesus, we have only One true Enemy. People are not our real enemies, just vessels.

11 **Preparing to Forgive**

- We must begin to see people as "sin sick" – recognizing that those who have hurt us are in need of God's redemption and have been a victim too
- Forgiveness is not reconciliation - we won't necessarily be in a relationship with this person - it just means we've cleaned our own wound, and prepared for God to show us the next step

12 **Applying Forgiveness**

- We can't apply forgiveness intellectually or emotionally – it must be poured out from our Spirit
- This means our connection to God is priority in this process.
- Before you start this process, declare the righteousness of Christ (His blood) over your life.
- Remember, He filters you through Jesus Christ and you are to learn to filter others in the same way.
- Review steps and process in book.

13 **Grieving Losses**

- Much of the codependent's journey is about grieving losses
- Some of our core issues can be what we never had, or what we had and lost, not just what was done to us
- The process of grief must be initiated at some point – people will go through this in different ways at different points in their healing.
- Losses should include all we discussed in Chapter 6 regarding unmet need, divorce, death, abortion, loss of innocence, etc.

14 **Steps to Grieving Loss**

- Identify
- Legitimize (we might get angry at the act at this point)
- Connect emotionally
- Acknowledge blame
- Acknowledge powerlessness
- Choose to forgive
- Accept person who let us down (not the behavior)
- Say goodbye
- Ask God to meet our need

15 **Have I Forgiven?**

- When I think of the violation, does it still provoke feelings of anger and pain, or do I feel that is removed?
- Have I ever before felt or grieved over the sin? (is it “false” forgiveness)
- Do I see myself as worthy and precious, or do I still feel like the residue and pain of the past still haunts me?
- Am I willing to pray for the person who violated me, even being willing to ask God to bless him or her?
- Would I be obedient to do anything for that person God asked me to do?
- If this person “spits in face” again, how would I respond? (Granted I am not participating and have set healthy boundaries)

16 **Living in Acceptance**

- When I learn to walk in the reality of God’s grace, acceptance and resources, I’m going to be okay.
- Life still might hurt, but I can look forward with hope, I have God on my side
- People and the past begins to lose power over me, God begins to overpower everything else.
- Life becomes about God’s redemption – I live in gratitude and praise for Him
- I’m ready to find God’s true calling, true plan and true purpose in my life.
- I’m free to be able to engage in relationships in a healthy way