

## PRAYING FOR FORGIVENESS

*Bear with one another and forgive any complaint you may have against someone else. Forgive as the Lord forgave you (Colossians 3:13).*

*Then he [Jesus] took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins (Mathew 26:27-28).*

*Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).*

*If we confess our sins [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).*

*[Jesus said]: "Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses" (Mark 11:25).*

*[Jesus said]: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back" (Luke 6:36-38).*

### **Forgiveness**

Forgiveness is central to Jesus' message: Forgiveness of our sins by God; forgiveness of ourselves; forgiveness of others.

Natural tendency: desire for revenge (our fallen nature) and generational patterns of unforgiveness learned from family and culture. How was forgiveness modelled in your home?

Objections to forgiveness: don't feel like it; offends our human sense of fairness; overlooks justice; appear weak/condoning sinful actions

### **Unforgiveness**

Sin separates us from God and one another; imprisons those who refuse to forgive; affects our physical and emotional well-being; resentment ("feeling again") keeps us in bondage, bound to the one who hurt us and to the past.

### **Process of forgiving**

- Naming the sin or offense/the wound or trauma
- Lament/grieve/share (listening)
- Offer the pain/hurt to God
- Inner healing
- Absolution (proclamation: you are forgiven)
- Receiving forgiveness
- Forgiving self, others
- Blessing your enemies
- Recognizing the gift of God
- Reach out/reconcile – as God leads

Costly; takes time; decision of the will (not always feelings); only by grace (on our own, we cannot)

## Four-Way Forgiveness Prayer

### 1. Hold up to the Lord all thing things about the person that trouble you.

Bring before the Lord all the things a particular person has done that bother or hurt you. Physically put your hands together and pile up, in your hands, all these things to give to God. Verbalize each offense as you place it in your hands. When you are finished, turn your hands over and release all these things to the Lord.

Suggested prayer: *Lord Jesus, I give you each one of these things and ask that you take them and pour your love and healing power through them. I thank you, Lord, that you have the power and the grace to redeem them. I ask you, Lord Jesus, to lift all the pain and hurt that have been involved with each one of these experiences, that you lift it from heart, from my mind, from my spirit, from my body. I ask that you lift the burden of these things from my shoulders. I give all this to you, Lord, and trust you to deal with it. Thank you, Lord, for taking each one of these things. (I desire to forgive \_\_\_\_\_; please give me the grace to do so.) Amen.*

### 2. Hold up to the Lord all thing things about you that trouble this person.

Put your hands together again and prepare to lift up all those things about yourself that may trouble the person you are forgiving. Then, go through the same process of verbally listing them and piling them up one by one in your hands. When you cannot think of anything else, turn your hands over and release these things to the Lord. Now pray a similar type of prayer (suggested):

*Lord Jesus, I ask you to pour your love and healing power over these things. I ask you to heal this hurt and pain and disappointment. Lord, I give you this relationship and ask you to deal with it. Help me to trust you with it. Forgive me and help me to forgive myself. Amen.*

### 3. Hold up to the Lord your heart's desire for this person.

Hold out your hands as if to offer that person to the Lord and share with the Lord what the desire of your heart is for him or her. List those things, placing them in your hands. When you are finished, turn your hands over and give them all to the Lord, just as before.

Suggested prayer: *Lord, I give \_\_\_\_\_ to you. I thank you that you know him/her better than anyone else. Bring about your perfect will for \_\_\_\_\_, and pour your love into him/her and your healing power flow over him/her. I release \_\_\_\_\_ to your care. Amen.*

### 4. Hold up to the Lord your heart's desire for yourself.

Hold yourself before the Lord and share with him what the desires of your heart are for yourself, what you would like to see Jesus do in your life today. Name these things out loud, put them in your hands and release them to God.

Suggested prayer: *Lord, I release these desires to you and ask that you pour your love, mercy, and grace into them. Thank you that I can trust you with these things. Surround me with your heavenly angels. Help me to know how much you love. Continue to reveal yourself to me in a mighty way. Thank you, Lord. Amen.*

(Adapted from *The Healing Touch*, by Norma Dearing, pages 69-71)

## Resources

Norma Dearing, *The Healing Touch: A Guide to Healing Prayer* (Grand Rapids: Chosen), 2002.

Mike Flynn & Doug Gregg, *Inner Healing* (Downers Grove: IVP), 1993.

R.T. Kendall, *Total Forgiveness* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House), 2007.

Francis MacNutt, *Healing* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press), 1974, 1999.

Francis & Judith MacNutt, *School of Healing Prayer, Level I and Level II*®, Christian Healing Ministries, Jacksonville, FL.

Russ Parker, *Forgiveness is Healing* (London: DLT), 1993 and reprinted in 2001.

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