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## Relationships Take Work: The Work of Forgiveness

### The Sources of Forgiveness

There are four words that define biblical forgiveness, and it is important to understand what they mean and how they are expressed.

#### From God to People – 1 Source

**Forgive** – to pardon, spare, or relieve someone from the burden of their offense

- Never does it represent humans extending forgiveness to anyone; only God does the forgiving.
- This is the reason for the shock of Jesus' listeners when they heard Him tell the paralytic, "Your sins are forgiven." (Luke 5:20)
- **2 Chron. 7:14** – *If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will **forgive** their sin and heal their land.*
- **Ps. 103:1-3** – *Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who **forgives** all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases.*
- **This is classified as judicial forgiveness.** It is the forgiveness that fully recognizes the guilt of the accused but chooses to extend a full pardon.

*"God doesn't bury the hatchet; He destroys the hatchet." – Dr. D'Ann Johnson*

#### From People to People – 3 Sources

**Forgive** –

OT: to lift up

NT: to send off; lay aside, put away, and forsake.

NT: to grant as a favor; graciously pardon or rescue

The forgiveness that Paul encouraged the Corinthians to extend to an offending brother (1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Cor. 2:6-7)

The forgiveness Jesus spoke of when Peter asked, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?”

*“This sin transcends your ability to keep record.” – Dr. D’Ann Johnson*

*“To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.” – Lewis B. Smedes*

## The Struggle of Forgiveness

**Forgiveness is a struggle when we don’t properly process pain.**

When someone breaks our heart or betrays our trust, the pain can make us vulnerable and open us up to the scheme of the enemy to hurt us even more, derail us spiritually, and rob us of God’s blessing.

**Forgiveness is a struggle when we confuse it with forgetfulness.**

When we forgive, we don’t forget the act, we are simply no longer bound by the memory.

**Forgiveness is a struggle when we feel compelled to maintain the relationship.**

We can release the offense and remove ourselves from the offender.

*“With some people you just have to move your desk.” – Dr. D’Ann Johnson*

**Forgiveness is a struggle when we expect remorse before release**

*Forgiveness doesn’t excuse their behavior; it prevents their behavior from destroying your heart. – Dr. D’Ann Johnson*