

MARRIAGE

The people we are in closest proximity with throughout our lives have the ability to bring us our greatest joy and deepest pain. In society and in the church, we see that some of the deepest wounds come out of family and marriage relationships. Wounds keep us from connecting with the people we should be loving the most.

Forgiveness is essential to heal wounds and move forward in relationships, including and especially marriage. God calls us to forgive as a blessing to our relationships.

Colossian 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Ephesians 4:31-32 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Personal Reflection: Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you if there is an area of unforgiveness in your heart in regards to your spouse. If nothing comes to mind about your spouse, think of any other strained relationship in your life that you need to work through. Write down the specific hurt you experienced. Spend some time telling Jesus how this felt.

Forgiveness is not denying that an event happened or dismissing pain. Neither is it trusting when it isn't safe to trust. It is releasing the other person to Jesus and not attempting to execute His justice ourselves.

Hebrews 12:12-15 Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled.

Hurt that isn't processed with Jesus turns into unforgiveness which can turn into a bitter root that will affect all areas of our lives and negatively impact those we come into contact with.

Personal Reflection: Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the specific impact of this unprocessed hurt or unforgiveness has had in your life. If necessary, spend some time in confession.

There is much hope! Jesus is the way of forgiveness! He forgave us of our sin and through relationship with Him empowers us to follow in His steps and forgive others.

Colossians 1:19-20 *For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 2and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*

Listening Prayer: Ask Jesus to reveal one step He is asking you to take in this process of forgiveness. i.e. inner healing, act of kindness, etc. Write down a plan to implement what He reveals to you.

Listening Prayer: Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see your spouse (or other relationship) through His eyes this morning. What is He thinking about your spouse today? What hope does He have for Him? How does God love Him?

Intercession: Write out a prayer of blessing for this person.
