

Forgive – Why and How?
Lent 2021 – Session Four
All Saints' Episcopal Church
Fr. Jambor

BCP p. 816 – For Our Enemies (#6)

O God, the Father of all, whose Son commanded us to love our enemies:

Lead them and us from prejudice to truth;

deliver them and us from hatred, cruelty, and revenge;

and in your good time enable us all to stand reconciled before you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Stages of Forgiving

We Hurt	pain
We Hate	anger
We Heal	release/freedom our forgiving brings us
We Hug	reconciliation/restoration
We Heighten	growth

Obstacles to Forgiveness: Fears and Misconceptions

Fears – particularly fears of loss:

- Fear of Losing the Energy Anger Produces
- Fear of Losing Leverage in the Relationship
- Fear of Losing Hope for a Better Relationship
- Fear of Losing Power and Control
- Fear of Losing the Image of Superiority

Misconceptions – Forgiveness is NOT...

- Condoning the Behavior
- Forgetting What Happened
- Restoring Trust in the Person
- Agreeing to Reconcile
- Doing the Person a Favor
- Easy

The Steps of Forgiveness

1. Choose to Forgive
2. Don't Cry Alone
3. Do Get Angry
4. Forgiving and Forgetting
5. Choose Reconciliation or Not to Reconcile
6. Choose to Restoration or Not

Reconciliation

1. Be honest with yourself
2. Remember... forgiveness is not reconciliation

MT 18:21-22 (p 1195 RSV)

Peter came up and said to Jesus, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven."

3. Healing of the relationship is found in repentance
4. Make a move – act
5. Be vulnerable
6. Speak and keep an understanding ear
7. Make a deal
8. Set your limits
9. Follow through

Rom 5 (p 1366 RSV)

V 1 “Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

V 6 “While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.”

V 10 “For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more now that we are reconciled shall we be saved by his life.”

V 11 Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have now received our reconciliation.”

2 Cor 5:18-21 (p 1402 RSV)

V 18 “All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;

V 19 “that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.”

Restoration

The Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11 ff, p 1269 RSV)

The Sacrament of Confession (a.k.a. Reconciliation)

BCP p 451

The Priest then lays a hand upon the penitent's head saying

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered himself to be sacrificed for us to the Father, and who conferred power on his Church to forgive sins, absolve you through my ministry by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and restore you in the perfect peace of the Church. Amen.

From our Catechism (BCP p 855):

Q. What is the mission of the Church?

A. The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.