

Reflection - Module 4

For this assignment, you will answer each of the questions below. Each question should be answered in at least 1 paragraph (5 or more sentences) using details from this week's learning materials, as well as your own personal examples. You may type directly on this document, then save and submit it to Dropbox.

This week we talked about forgiveness-related issues, including types of forgiveness, how to forgive and how to let go of pain from the past. Create a practice session with a friend or think about someone in your life that you are struggling to forgive or struggled to forgive in the past.

1. Take some time to work through the assessment interview (by yourself or with a trusted individual). Were the questions helpful? Why or why not? Did the questions help identify some unresolved issues?

Answer:

As I went through the questions, or even this whole section, definitely a lot of things were brought up. Today, my sister is meeting up with her husband after not seeing him for a year because of his sin, which sounds like a good thing, but it seems like they want to push everything aside and just pretend like they have always been a happy little family. At the same time, it has been exactly a year from when my sister-in-law's mom died by her own hand due to a life of turmoil and hidden covered up issues much like my sister's situation. Needless to say, it is not an easy week, but God definitely orchestrated that I am studying about counseling in forgiveness because it made me realize I still need to forgive.

Thinking back to the first person who offended me from the questions, brought up a lot of hard memories. I was reminded of when I was going into 9th grade, my dad was a new pastor and we had just started up a youth group at the new church and had a great summer, but at the end of the summer, it came out that the youth leader was a fake, and was in an adulterous relationship. It destroyed our youth group and his family in one day, as well as me. I walked through those next months of starting High School trying to fit in but not trusting anyone and hating him so much it made me bitter and created an obstacle in my walk with God. Slowly, God chipped away at my wall, stripped away any friends I tried to run to, and showed me that I needed to forgive and embrace my relationship with Him if I wanted to be a real Christian. It was a process but it taught me a crucial lesson for my life in forgiveness. One that I am always learning, but reading through the steps of forgiveness and reasons we should and dangers of unforgiveness reminded me of those things I learned then and each time I've been faced with forgiveness in a deeper way.

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Now, with my brother-in-law I am struggling because I don't trust that he is repentant or truly changed. Recognizing that forgiving is not reconciling and that trust is a separate thing that needs to be earned is a good thing. I know I need to forgive him and let him know that, so I am working through that a lot through this section.

I think something that is really hard for me is forgiving someone when they hurt others who I'm close with, especially the defenseless like my nieces. However, I am learning even through this class, that it is not a reason to not forgive and how damaging holding onto anything can be to me.

2. What boundaries would be helpful to set in the future and why?

Answer:

I had a girl that I disciplined a few years back. I met with her once a week for 2 years, but it turned out she was living a lie and was covering up sin and it really hurt me and was hard to forgive and overcome. One of the biggest reasons was because I was too close to her, almost taking on her emotions and issues. Then I had a girl living with me that undermined me and pitted the other young women living here against me, again, I let her emotions and problems affect me personally too much. These taught me I have to separate from these types of problems, recognize I am not able to bear everything and it is okay to shut the door at times and be alone, and also to not let others issues infiltrate my every day. With these things that have gone on in my family over the past year, I realized people have to live their life and you cannot control them, but I can only do my part and my part is to, as much as it depends on me, "live at peace with all men." Sometimes that means not getting too close to people who hurt you.

3. Review the suggested action steps - which step or steps would be most helpful in this situation and why?

Answer:

Writing letters is a great practice, whether they are being sent or not sent. I have been thinking about writing Brian a letter. Now, after reading these action items, I am more motivated to do so, but I was thinking I would start by writing him a letter that I don't plan on sending, so I can put my offense on paper. Also, I like the idea of writing from his perspective, trying to see his side. Though, I don't want to, which confirms I still have unforgiveness in my heart. I know God's forgiveness has extended to all, and who am I to not forgive. I want to be able to tell him, I forgive him and I desire to see him change without giving him a piece of my mind, with true grace, so I think

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after the other letters, I will write him a simple note that expresses that. I am praying mostly for God's grace in my heart in this situation.

4. What does scripture say on this subject?

Answer:

"Forgive seventy times seven times." This is ringing in my ears. Yes, forgiveness is not reconciliation, but there is not a limit to it, and our response should always be to forgive. Romans 5:8 is such a strong verse because, Jesus died for us while we were his enemy, that expresses the depth of grace and forgiveness that he showed us. I looked up Corrie ten Boone's story of forgiveness when I read the quote in the book. I was struck with how hard it must have been for her to extend her hand to the former guard, and then it struck me, what God did towards us is even deeper. That is the heart we are to have towards others.

Due Date: Sunday of Module 4, by 11:59 p.m. (EST)