

## **RP10 – Forgiveness**

By Lisa Chen

“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” – Matt. 6:12. Our heavenly Father asks us to forgive others as He forgives us, which I know as His child that I should obey and act accordingly. I also understand that forgiving others would release myself from the pain of being hurt, therefore, I am willing to forgive and would not hold onto it for a long time. However, it’s easier said than done.

After reading the handouts, I find there are some myths in my perception about forgiveness. For example, I thought forgiveness is “forgetting” the wrong-doings the other person did to me. After a period of time when my anger and feeling of hurt subsided, I tried to let go of the wrong-doing and would not mention it any more. I thought time can heal the pain and help me forget it. And as long as I “forget”, it means I “forgive” the person. However, “forgive” does not equal to “forget”. As a matter of fact, it means the wrong doing can still be remembered, but I choose not to continually think about it or bring it up to use it against the person. I have to admit that sometimes I couldn’t help bringing up an old incident when a similar case pops up. I thought I have forgiven the person but obviously it’s not the case. The previous “forgiveness” was superficial and my anger was just minimized and easily triggered again when a similar case occurs.

When being hurt by someone, I tend to avoid the confrontation with the person. I definitely feel the pain associated with the hurt but I usually would not express my hurt and anger directly as I’m afraid the confrontation may deepen the pain or even bring shame. Now I understand that expressing the hurt and anger with clear language is an important step in the process of forgiveness. Matthew 18:15 says, “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you.” Only when I express out the hurt and anger, can I choose to let it go and accept the offender once again. An unexpressed pain would not go away by itself. If not expressed in a proper way, it may eventually be expressed as a harm to myself, the offender or some innocent third party. May the Lord give me the strength to confront the pain brought by a hurt and express it out to God and to the offender in a direct and healthy way.