

I do not feel like I have many situations where I need to forgive people. My natural tendency is to forgive people, if anything I too quickly let things go and move on from them in hopes to reduce conflict. But, as I considered some people that maybe I need to forgive still, one couple came to mind. I shared about them in my grief journal. If you had asked me before the grief journal or the lecture on forgiveness, I think I would have said that I had already forgiven them. But, I don't think I ever properly grieved the offense or let go of some of the bitterness that I feel toward them. In this paper, I will strive to clarify and grieve the offense and recognize the ways in which I contributed.

JD and Chelsea were my two best friends in college. But, when I met my now wife, Sarah, they kind of drifted away. Chelsea and Sarah knew each other in High School and they didn't exactly get along. But, when they didn't accept Sarah or try to get to know her very much that hurt me as well as her. Ultimately, I am married to Sarah now and I don't really speak to JD and Chelsea even though I was the best man in their wedding.

I think what hurt me the most was their lack of trust in me. It seems like they didn't trust my decision-making and that I was getting into a relationship with someone that they didn't approve of or didn't think was good enough for me. But, they never clarified with me what I saw in her or why I was dating her. They just didn't approve. It also made me feel like I wasn't a good enough friend to make an effort to get to know someone whom I cared for. It made me feel like I wasn't valuable enough. Like I wasn't worth it. And that really sucks, because I would have done a lot to keep their friendship. But, it didn't seem like they thought it was worth it to lay their preferences aside for me. They were my closest friends and they let past experiences when Sarah and Chelsea were only dumb teenagers get in the way of our friendship.

I think that what I never did with this was identify any sinful reactions that I had, confess them to God, and then forgive JD and Chelsea. One sinful reaction that I had toward them was that I thought of myself as better than them. I became prideful. I knew Sarah's past and some of the mistakes she had made, but I was able to look past them and see who she was now. They were being judgmental and didn't like her based on the past. And therefore, I was better than them. I was more like Jesus than they were. So I became prideful.

Another sinful reaction that I had toward them was I punished them passive-aggressively by not reaching out to them as much. I didn't make it a priority to spend time with them because I was frustrated and hurt by them. Rather than talking to them about what I was feeling and processing it with them, I punished them in the only way I knew how, by pulling back and spending less and less time with them. A third sinful reaction that I had toward them was that I spoke badly about them to other people. It was with many different people, but there were certain people in my life that I spoke poorly about them too. I said they were bad friends, and that they were doing this wrong and that wrong. Even though I wasn't making up things about them, what I was saying were things that they had done, I still had no right to speak poorly about them and gossip about them to other people. I wasn't doing it in a way that was processing the hurt I was feeling, I was doing it to tell people how they were wrong.

I confess that I shouldn't have had those sinful reactions. That it was wrong of me to do those things. I want to forgive JD and Chelsea for the ways they hurt me. I want to forgive them for making me feel invaluable and for the ways they treated me and Sarah. I recognize that they were still college students and didn't necessarily have the ability to act differently in the situation and I recognize that I contributed to the downward trajectory of our friendship.