

# **Forgiving My Spouse**

# Forgiveness (1)

**Ephesians 4:32 – “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”**

I find it difficult to forgive. Although I intellectually understand that I should forgive my spouse who has wronged me, my heart refuses to forgive. Honestly, there are times when I don't even want to forgive her. Especially when I think about how she treated me, it makes me so angry, and sometimes I even feel the desire to treat her the same way. Yet, I endure. The Bible says, 'Love is patient' (1 Cor. 13:4), so I try to be patient again and again. However, she continues to hurt my heart. Despite everything, she does not seek forgiveness from me. No, it seems like she doesn't even feel the need to ask for forgiveness. Perhaps she doesn't even realize that she has hurt my feelings. Consequently, she acts as if nothing happened, both in words and actions. I find it unbearable and dislike that aspect of her so much. Therefore, I do not want to forgive.

When a couple lives together, they inevitably make numerous mistakes toward each other. No, it's more accurate to say that couples can't help but make countless mistakes toward each other. The differences in their personalities, upbringing, and the influence each received from their respective parents can lead to impulses and conflicts resulting in wrongdoing. However, the fundamental cause is that two sinners come together, marry, and form a household. Think about it. When two sinners come together, marry, and form a household, how can they not wrong each other? Not only do we wrong each other, but we also commit countless sins against each other. However, the problem is that even after committing so many wrongs and sins against each other, we fail to forgive each other. Even when we forgive, we do not do so as much as we have wronged and sinned against each other. We are slow to forgive, and at times, we outright refuse to forgive. Living in this way, where we do not fully forgive each other, leaves wounds and bitterness in our hearts. These wounds and bitterness prevent us from loving our spouses wholeheartedly.

## Forgiveness (2)

**Matthew 6:14-15: “For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”**

The wounds and bitterness in our hearts prevent us from seeing the good in each other and instead focus only on the wrongs we've experienced. The more we see these wrongs, the more inclined we are to judge, criticize, and even condemn each other. What we often fail to realize in these judgments, criticisms, and condemnations is that we are imposing our self-righteousness on each other. For instance, when we fail to forgive our spouses who have wronged us and instead hold onto the wounds and bitterness in our hearts, we approach them with judgment (even if only in our minds), criticism, and condemnation every time they make a mistake, asserting, 'You are wrong, and I am right.' In doing so, we seek validation before God, claiming our own righteousness. Consequently, we become prideful, unaware of the sins we commit against God, as we fail to recognize the need for His forgiveness. So, what sin is the person committing against God? It's the sin of not forgiving our spouses. Despite harboring wounds and bitterness, we judge, criticize, and even (at least emotionally) condemn our spouses' mistakes and sins. How does this appear before God? Moreover, consider the heart of our spouses receiving this judgment, criticism, and condemnation. They feel unloved by us, experiencing hurt and, as a result, may find it difficult or impossible to forgive. If couples continue to live without forgiving each other, what will happen? Their hearts will continue accumulating wounds and bitterness. Eventually, this accumulation may lead to an explosion of emotions towards each other, and their marital relationship is bound to break apart.

## Forgiveness (3)

**Mark 8:34 – “And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”**

**Luke 11:4 – “Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.”**

The Bible says, "But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins" (Mt. 6:15). When spouses make mistakes, they should forgive each other. The one who has erred should not just end with saying "I am sorry" but should also be able to say, "I am wrong" and articulate specifically what they did wrong to their spouse. Furthermore, they should demonstrate a commitment to avoid repeating the mistake in the future. However, forgiveness is not an easy task. The challenge arises from our inherent selfish nature, which tends to believe that the faults of others are greater and more numerous than our own. Additionally, our instinct is to desire and expect the other person to forgive us rather than forgiving them. Conquering this selfish instinct is a difficult and challenging task. Forgiving one's spouse requires denying oneself and making sacrifices (Mk. 8:34). Yet, the rewards of forgiveness are beautiful. When a spouse forgives, the other should reciprocate. However, forgiveness should be done in the spirit of "as God in Christ forgave you" (Eph. 4:32). Just as a sinner like oneself has been forgiven by God through Jesus Christ, continues to be forgiven, and will be forgiven in the future, believing in this, one should forgive their spouse's mistakes. After forgiveness, one should accept their spouse as they are and love them with God's love. In doing so, one can pray to the Lord in this manner: "Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation" (Lk. 11:4).