

## ENJOYING GOD'S FORGIVENESS

To Forgive...Divine - Part 5 of 6  
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*To experience God's forgiveness is the most valuable and life-changing gift we can ever receive*

Mark 2.1-11

### I. FORGIVENESS IS IMPORTANT

"The first and deepest kind of healing that Christ brings is . . . forgiveness."

Francis MacNutt, *Healing* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria, 1999), 169.

"The unforgiving and unforgiven person may, like a thirsty person with a parched tongue, need forgiveness not for physical survival but for survival more intangible. [The need...] left unmet may result in an emotional ... shriveling of the capacity to love and be loved, to trust and be trusted."

Beverly Flanigan, *Forgiving the Unforgivable: Overcoming the Bitter Legacy of Intimate Wounds* (New York: Collier, 1992), 233-34.

### II. WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

"God's forgiveness is being reconciled to him..."

[Romans 5.1: "access"]

...because he deals with our sin."

covered, taken away, sent away, removed, guilt lifted, wiped away, healed, forgotten, pardoned, put away, unpunished, erased, acquitted, intentionally overlooked, delivered, given mercy, purified, decontaminated, and released.

### III. HOW TO ENJOY GOD'S FORGIVENESS

#### 1. Accept Responsibility

"**IF** we confess our sins, we can trust God to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1.9

#### 2. Accept God's gift of Forgiveness

Matthew 18.23-34

#### 3. Forgive others

*"Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us."*

- As we forgive others (who don't deserve it) we inwardly "get it" that God's forgiveness is free and are able to receive it.

#### 4. How Do We Forgive?

Recall the hurt

Empathize

Altruistically give forgiveness

Commit publicly to forgive

Hold onto forgiveness

Everett Worthington, *Five Steps to Forgiveness* (New York: Crown, 2001)

Dear God, I need your forgiveness. I'm sorry for the things I have said and done that have hurt you, and for living my life without you. As far as I know how, I forgive those who have hurt me. I no longer want to make them pay or suffer. I release them. I thank you for your free gift of forgiveness; and I ask that, by your Spirit, you will fill me with your powerful presence. Amen.