

HEALING THE PAST GOD'S WAY
CHAPTER 12 TEACHING NOTES
FORGIVENESS

MEMORY VERSE:

In Him we have redemption through His blood,
the forgiveness of our trespasses,
according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us.
Ephesians 1:7-8a

When we live our lives as victims, our focus on sin is almost always on the sins committed against us. It is very easy to forget that we, ourselves, are sinners saved by grace.

Remind them that they are not responsible for the sins committed against them; they are responsible for their response to those sins. We are responsible for our thoughts, words and actions in response to another's sins.

You will not be able to move someone out of their self-focus or victimhood mentality until he or she grasps on a basic level that they sin on a daily basis and that our identity in Christ must include an understanding of our status as a sinner and our need for a Savior. Daily, we live covered by the blood of Jesus Christ.

FORGIVEN

FOCUS ON MY SIN – I AM RESPONSIBLE
NOT A FOCUS ON HIS / HER SIN – I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE

SINNERS

BY BIRTH: Romans 5:12 - 21

BY NATURE: Romans 7:13 - 25

BY CHOICE: Romans 6:15 – 23

BEFORE YOU MOVE ON, DEFINE "SIN" FOR THE CLASS (reinforce this lesson from chapter 2)

“And He (Jesus) said to him,
‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD
WITH ALL YOUR HEART,
AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL,
AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’

This is the great and foremost commandment.

The second is like it,

‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’

On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

Matthew 22:37-40

VISUAL TEACHING NOTE:

Draw a stick figure on the white board. Write the name, *God* above the figure and draw an arrow from the figure, pointing at God. Then draw an arrow pointing to the left of the stick figure. Next to the second arrow, write the words – pain, past, people, possessions, passions, fear, anger (and other words that describe our focus).

Then, ask the women to look up and to the side at the same time. Obviously, it can't be done. Remind them that when their life's focus is on anything other than God (like people or past or pain), they are disobeying the command to love God with ALL their heart, soul and mind. When we live as a victim, we are sinning simply by our focus and perspective.

Remind them again – we are all accomplished sinners, not just those who have sinned against us

Because we are sinners by birth, by nature and by choice, sin must be dealt with on a daily basis. Allowing a sin to fester over a period of days, weeks or months only serves to invite further sin. Satan will use any opening to avail himself of your natural tendency toward pride. Take this opportunity to establish a pattern of daily confession and repentance. Nothing is as powerful in a believer's life as an attitude of submission in acknowledgment of God's awesome character.

MY PART: CONFESS & REPENT

There is no rowing to paradise except upon the stream of repenting tears.

Repentance is required as a qualification.

It is not so much to endear us to Christ as to endear Christ to us.

Till sin be bitter, Christ will not be sweet.

The Doctrine of Repentance

By Thomas Watson

Confess your sins to God. Say them out loud, speaking them out as the Holy Spirit reveals them to your heart. Confess your known sins. Then, ask God to reveal sins of which you may not be aware. Confess them too. Take your time and walk through the process of verbally laying your sin at the feet of the cross.

Repent. No mystery here. The confession, without repentance, is worthless. Confession is an acknowledgment of sin; repentance is the act of turning away from sin.

Repentance comes in three steps:

1. An acknowledgment of my sin, an agreement with God about the sin
2. A true, heart brokenness before God, understanding what your sin cost God
3. A desire to be changed by God, a 180 degree turn away from sin and toward God

GOD'S PART: FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is not being required to pay the debt that is owed. When I am forgiven, I've been released from my obligation to satisfy that debt. (John 14:6, 1 Peter 3:18, 2 Corinthians 5:17 – 21, Colossians 2:13 & 14, Hebrews 9:22, Colossians 1:13 - 14)

MERCY – not getting what I deserve

Ephesians 2:4 & 5

GRACE – getting what I do not deserve / unmerited favor

Ephesians 2: 8 & 9

RESTORATION: RENEWED RELATIONSHIP

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 3:2

Repentance is the only way to a relationship with God – that was John the Baptist's message in preparation to Jesus' death and resurrection and the message of Paul in 2 Corinthians 5. There is no other way.

This is the relationship for which I was created. Desire it; grow it; humble yourself enough to seek that relationship through repentance as God reveals to you your heart.

*I love ending the teaching on Forgiveness by having the women use scraps of paper to write words, phrases that remind them of God's gift of forgiveness. Have them write as many as they would like – scandalous, merciful, glorious Savior, freedom – are some we've gotten over the years. Then, have them lay out the papers and choose two or three or more of the words to take home, put up and be reminded of God's forgiveness on a daily basis.