

Transition:

Forgiveness in marriage mirrors God's forgiveness, restoring unity and healing relational wounds. Just as we love because He first loved us (1Jn 4:19), so we forgive because we are forgiven MUCH (Mat 18:21-35)! To deny forgiveness to someone asking for it would be to deny your own forgiveness from The Lord (Mat 6:12, Luk 11:4).

"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you."

Lewis B. Smedes

Tell the story:

Tell the story (with passion!) the best as you can, don't stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story. Perhaps leave some parts out or make a mistake, just to see if your group catches it!

Rebuild the story:

Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story. Then have someone else tell the story the best they can – just like you modeled the first time.

Discussion Questions:

1. Is there anything that would be biblical unforgivable? (Mat 12:31-32)
2. Is/Are there specific offense(s) in your marriage, either caused by you or against you, that are difficult to forgive? What's halting forgiveness?

Fundamental:

Forgiveness is not about condoning or dismissively excusing sin, but an acknowledgement of you forgiving their indebtedness to you (Eph 4:32). Marriage is a covenant between our Heavenly Father and two sinners, unfortunately sin will find a way to creep into your marriage. It's important to realize both husband and wife have erred and fallen short (Rom 3:10), however, through the blood of The Lamb each were made clean and BLAMELESS (Col 1:22). Biblical forgiveness is not dismissing sins, but rather entrusting God for justice on your behalf (Heb 4:13). Harboring unforgiveness, bitterness, anger, and resentment not only harm your spouse and your marriage, but also your relationship with God (Eph 4:31-32).

Homework/Challenge:

1. Pray over some of the hurt you still harbor in your marriage. If it's unforgiven, ask God for the strength to forgive and work towards reconciliation (if possible).
2. Pray over the unforgiven hurt you have caused your spouse, working to make amends and reconcile.
3. Take time and pray together with your spouse.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, please help me to release my anger and forgive my spouse, just as you have forgiven me. Allow us to see each other how you see us and be able to see you in each other. Help us become closer and more in tune even with you.