

## Non-Negotiable #1 – Forgiveness

### PART A

Did you wince when you saw that title? Yeah, this is one of the toughest principles for John 10:10 Abundant Life. The blend of calling, gifting, personality, life experience and personal brokenness that makes me “Ken,” led to many opportunities to practice or reject it through the years. I know the struggle - and I know it’s indescribable freedom.

Countless Christians suffer in body, soul and spirit under the weight of the anger and bitterness that accompany unforgiveness. Sleeplessness and depression take their toll and it is well known that our immune system is handicapped along with high blood pressure and stomach ulcers. Medical doctors and mental health professionals know the risks of unforgiveness. See [www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/forgiveness/art-20047692](http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/forgiveness/art-20047692)



Potentially offensive scenarios come at us regularly, from the “jerk” on the highway to a friend’s or partner’s words, to church or mission leaders who use power to protect themselves or favored individuals from scrutiny at your expense - but we always have a choice about letting it capture us.

Forgiving others is unfair and costly. SOMEone has to “pay” and it ought to be the offender – right? Jesus’ call for the offended one to forgive, simply doesn’t make sense to the mind shaped by fleshly instincts and I fought it hard for years. But then there’s Matthew 6:14-15 (heavy, heavy), Ephesians 4:32, and I Peter 3:9, for example.

I am grateful beyond words that God has led me to the place that I am free of that malady, but I periodically work through some of the painful events of the past and ask Him to show me anyone I have missed.

One way to tell if we have forgiven someone is by what we feel when we unexpectedly meet them. If I feel a twinge of darkness, which can happen, I take it to God and we process it further. We actually can feel kindly toward an offender even before they acknowledge their offense. We win.

Wallowing in the muck of replaying painful events and scheming revenge might be satisfying for the moment in a morbid way, but it deepens pain’s root in our soul. We lose.

Tomorrow: Part B, “Three key principles about forgiving others are” - -.

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