

Spiritual Habit: Forgiveness



“Bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”—Colossians 3:13 (ESV)

Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, “Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a constant attitude.” In marriage, this is sometimes hard to do when we’ve been wounded by the one we love. Sometimes, the wound runs so deep it may feel like it will never heal, and yet, forgiveness is expected. Other times, the offense is a constant replay of a hurtful act, and again, forgiveness is expected. Or it

may be a one-time offense that’s easy to forgive and move on from. The act of forgiveness is a skill and tool that is constantly being utilized in marriage. But, how can couples be ready to forgive and be truly authentic in painful moments?

In today’s passage, we read we’re to bear “with one another.” This is a profound statement as it shows us it’s an attitude of virtue. It’s an act of doing—an action of “putting on” godly behavior and “putting off” sinful behavior. This is how the act of forgiveness can be built up and become a permanent fixture in our hearts and mind. It’s like training a muscle; if you don’t use it, you’ll lose it. It becomes a deep-embedded godly attitude, so when the time comes to forgive it flows out without hesitation.

Forgiveness is not easy to master, but it’s a virtue worth mastering. It allows for moments to honor one another in marriage and ultimately bring glory to God. Through forgiveness, we learn how to be better at loving each other as well as the attitude of virtue: of putting on and putting off.

Pause and Discuss:

1. What comes to mind when you think of the attitude of forgiveness?
2. Am I quick to forgive? If no, what can I do to improve?
3. How important is being forgiven to me? And, how does this effect my practice of forgiving?
4. What is the impact of not practicing forgiveness on my marriage?

Practice: Challenge yourself to study what the Bible says about putting on godly behavior and putting off sinful behavior. Once you have this understanding, demonstrate it through acts of forgiveness in your marriage.

Pray: Heavenly Father, we come before You with an attitude of thanksgiving and praise. Thank You for demonstrating the ultimate act of forgiveness by dying on the cross for our sins. Help us to be good ambassadors as we show and give forgiveness to each other in those painful and hurtful moments in our marriage. Thank You for giving us the tools on how to bear with one another and learn how to put on and put off. We pray this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen