

## WHY IS FORGIVENESS CRUCIAL TO MOVING ON?

Adapted from *The First Responder Healing Manual* by Chris & Rahnella Adsit<sup>1</sup>

Our sins usually seem inconsequential when we first commit them – otherwise we wouldn’t do them. And the immediate results often seem relatively harmless. But something is *always* going on behind the scene that isn’t apparent, and which will have effects that will linger for a long time if not dealt with.

What is happening is *separation*.

Every time we make the decision to go against one of God’s laws, three separations potentially occur:

- A separation between you and God
- A separation between you and another person
- A separation between you and you

**BETWEEN YOU AND GOD.** When we nudge the Holy Spirit off the throne of our life in order to do something we know is wrong, we are “quenching” and “grieving” Him (1 Thessalonians 5:19; Ephesians 4:30). Isaiah 59:2 says “*But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.*” This does not alter your eternal connection with God – you were born into His family when you received Christ as your Savior, and you can’t get “unborn.” The eternal life He gave you is indeed *eternal* and He loves you with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3). But in terms of your experiential *relationship* with Him, it is strained. Much like when a husband and wife have a fight – they’re still married, but their communication is clipped, awkward and cold. They live together, but their hearts are separated. This is how it can feel between us and God.

**BETWEEN YOU AND ANOTHER PERSON.** When we do something that injures another person in some way, this too results in alienation – like the couple in the previous paragraph. In Matthew 5:22-26, Jesus describes this split between people, and urges us to set everything else aside and be reconciled to our offended brother or sister – for our own good (read the above passage in Matthew if you have a moment).

This works the other direction, too. When you are hurt by someone, you don’t want to hang with them much anymore. You avoid them. Once burned, twice smart.

**BETWEEN YOU AND YOU.** Sin also brings about a separation between who you are and who God is making you. In Ephesians 4:22-24, the Bible talks about your “old man” – corrupt, lustful, deceitful – and your “new man” – righteous, holy and honest. In Romans 7:14-24, no less a man than the Apostle Paul describes the war that rages between these two “men” in his soul. It’s like having two dogs fighting inside of you – a good one and a bad one. The one you feed wins. And sin feeds the bad dog.

These separations are counter-productive to your healing. You *need* those life-giving connections to God and to other Spirit-filled friends. Without them, you’re like that redwood tree growing in the open field (See *Good Dirt* article in the Week 2 Members Portal), or like a sheep wandering alone through the woods – vulnerable. And you need that unified, Christ-oriented control internally, so that you can receive and respond to His healing touch and direction.

What’s needed is *reconciliation* – to God, to others, and to yourself. This is accomplished through forgiveness – received and given.

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<sup>1</sup> Adsit, Chris & Rahnella, *The First Responder Healing Manual* (Eugene, OR: Branches of Valor, Int’l, 2015). pp. 79-80