

## The Necessity of Forgiveness / An Interview With Dr. Fred Luskin

### How do you think people view forgiveness?

- We're experiencing the consequences of a culture that is excessively angry. There is such damage done to relationships, people and health through anger, blame and a kind of self-righteous aggression. We live in a culture that's stressed and angry. People are hungering for solutions - a corrective has to emerge. And the most complete, strongest corrective is forgiveness.

### How do you define forgiveness?

- There's a wonderful definition of **forgiveness**: that to forgive is to give up all hope for a better past. If you are locked in regret over the past, you have less available to your life now. The other problem is that if you don't forgive, then you are in some ways prejudging your future - that you are on guard and defended and helpless, that there's a residual bitterness that influences your capacity for happiness because you haven't resolved something from your past.
- **Forgiveness** allows you a fresh start, whether it's a big insult or a small one. It's like a rain coming to a polluted environment. It clears things. At some point, you can say that this awful thing happened to me. It hurt like hell, yet I'm not going to allow it to take over my life. That's the choice that's always available. When you're with someone who's had tragedy, you offer that choice, although you don't tell them to take it. Without it, they can get stuck in bitterness and revenge. That's the cost of not forgiving.
- [<http://www.pbs.org/kqed/onenight/stories/forgive/>]

### What is forgiveness by Ken Cloke

- **Forgiveness** is not only a result, but a process of letting go of the past and opening to the future ... a way of releasing ourselves from the past, from the burden of our own false expectations, and from the pain we have experienced at the hands of others. It is a release from judgment including our judgments of ourselves.
- **Forgiveness** does not mean we agree with what the other party did, or that what they did was right.
- **Forgiveness** [frees us] from unhealthy pain, anger and shame. Anger gives the appearance of being powerful, but leaves us feeling frustrated and powerless. Forgiveness appears weak, but leaves us feeling stronger and less vulnerable to others.
- [http://www.powerofpeaceportland.com/reviews/what\\_is\\_forgiveness](http://www.powerofpeaceportland.com/reviews/what_is_forgiveness)

### Definitions of forgive and forgiveness ...

- To stop feeling angry or resentful toward (someone) for an offense, flaw, or mistake.
- To grant pardon for or remission of (an offense, debt, etc.); absolve; to cease to feel resentment against; to cancel an indebtedness or liability; to pardon an offense or an offender.

# FORGIVEN

**... to forgive  
is to give up  
all hope for  
a better  
past.**

**Nothing in the  
Christian life is more  
important than  
forgiveness—our  
forgiveness of others  
and God's forgiveness  
of us (John MacArthur).**

## Forgiven ...

- **Forgiven: Through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, Ephesians 1:7.**
- **Forgiven: All of our trespasses, debt canceled, Colossians 2:13-15.**
- **Forgiven: For His name's sake, 1 John 2:12.**
- **Forgiven: Blessed, Psalm 32:1, Romans 4:7-8.**

## Why do we forgive?

- **Forgive or embrace our bitterness, Ephesians 4:31.**
- **Forgive because this is who we are, Ephesians 4:32.**
- **Forgive or be overcome by evil, Romans 12:19-21.**
- **Forgive and let the love of God flow through our lives, Luke 7:44-49.**
- **Forgive and experience God's good measure, Luke 6:37-38.**

**Not forgiving** allows the **PAST** to poison our **PRESENT** and our **FUTURE**.