

Face Your Own Goliath! Leveling Out - Forgiveness

Hebrews 8:12 says: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins, and their lawless deeds. I will remember them no more." Then he adds in Hebrews 10:17, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

Consider this: If God does not remember your sin and casts sin behind His back as far as the east is from the west, never to remember it again, what would be a logical step for us to take to make a prayer of forgiveness a meaningful and tangible repentance?

Stones Exercise:

1. Use small rocks (1"-2") and an "Unforgiveness Bag" to hold the rocks.
2. Transfer each name listed from your "Forgiveness Sheet" to an individual rock by writing the name on a rock with a felt tip marker.
3. Next, put the "named rock" into your bag. Let's call this bag your "Unforgiveness Bag."
4. As you fill this bag with rocks, the first thing you will notice is its weight.
5. Carry this "Unforgiveness Bag" with you everywhere you go for several days. Notice how it gets in the way and becomes very irritating. (Everywhere means everywhere – you take your unforgiveness with you everywhere you go – this is a tangible representation of that fact)
6. The object of this exercise is to follow our Heavenly Father's example and tangibly let go of someone else's sin.
7. When it is time to let the rocks go, find a body of water such as a pond, lake, or stream. Sit with your back to the water and take each "named rock" out of the bag, one at a time.
8. Let the "named rock" remind you of who / what it is you need to say a prayer of forgiveness for.
9. Repeat this prayer over each "named rock" for the person / experience you are forgiving:
"Father, I realize that you have commanded me to forgive others. Therefore as an act of my willing obedience to your command, I choose to forgive and release _____. I therefore let go in the name of Jesus and I cast the offense into your sea of forgiveness, never again to be remembered by you."
10. As you pray over each "named rock", follow God's model by casting it over your shoulder into the water.
11. This symbolic gesture will help you sense the reality of your prayer of forgiveness.
12. When you cast a "named rock" over your shoulder into the water you can't see where it landed and you will never be able to retrieve it.
13. These are important truths about forgiveness. When you forgive someone of their offenses, you are letting go of your claim against them. God takes your offenses of blame toward this individual and throws them into the ocean of His forgiveness, just as you are casting this stone away. Both claims, yours on them, and God's on you, are released.
14. Also, you can't find the "named rock" which illustrates that when you have forgiven someone, you never need to bring the sin up again in anger, shame, or retribution. It is gone, never to be recounted.
15. You may say; "But I don't have the strength to forgive them! They don't deserve to be forgiven!" It is human to want to seek revenge, but it would be a good idea to read Deuteronomy 32:35; "*vengeance is mine, and I decree the punishment of all Her (Israel's) enemies; their doom is sealed.*" What does God say here about vengeance? It is His!
16. As vengeance belongs to God, then you need to let go of; forget about, getting even or seeking revenge on those who have hurt you.
17. If you can't forgive someone, pray this prayer:
"Dear Father God, I need your help to see my violator as you see them. Let me see them through your eyes of mercy. In Jesus name I pray."
18. Finish this exercise as best you can. The goal is to empty your bag of "named rocks" through specific forgiveness of each violator.
19. Once you have emptied your "Unforgiveness Bag" of every "named rock", pause, think and be aware of how you feel. When we forgive others, a major load is lifted off of ourselves (by God).
20. Because we have forgiven others, we have cleared the way for God to forgive us.
21. Spend some quiet moments in prayer and conversation with God. Express how you feel to Him, and thank Him for bringing you through to release, forgiveness, cleansing, and freedom.