**Relationship Topic:** Forgiveness and Restoration hearwelldone.org

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| In relationships there can be no true restoration without forgiveness, there can be no forgiveness without confession, and there can be no confession without repentance.**We should forgive those who wrong us, so a root of bitterness doesn’t grow up, but that won’t restore a relationship. Restoration is a two-way street.**  **Repent** To feel **pain**, **sorrow**, or **regret** for what one has done or neglected to do; but also - **a turning, and a turning from**  To **change your course** of conduct **on account of your regret**.  To be sorry for a sin, to seek forgiveness, and then cease to practice it.   **Confess** To **verbally acknowledge** a fault, crime, or misdeed (to someone) **To own or admit as true**, to assent to; to acknowledge, as after a previous doubt, denial, or concealment.     Assent:  to admit a thing as true.     **Seeking Forgiveness** Seeking Forgiveness, **fully confesses and admits** your guilt, and **asks** the offended **to not hold your sin against you** - so that your relationship can be restored.  **Rather than a defense of one’s actions, seeking forgiveness...** **1 Confesses** and admits both the **offense committed**, **and** the **wicked motive** of the heart that produced it.  2 **Communicates** the **repentance** of your heart, **and** the **commitment to change** the course of conduct which resulted in the offense.  3 Humbly **Requests** that the offended not hold the offense against you.   **Forgive** To willingly **give up your right** to hold something against someone. To **cease to feel** **resentment** against, on account of a wrong committed. To **pardon**, to **overlook** an offense, to **treat the offender as not guilty**.  **Restoration** Restore:  To bring back to its former state.  To bring back from a state of ruin, to give back, make return or restitution of anything taken away or lost.  Restoration: The act of restoring or bringing back to a former place, station, or condition; the fact of being restored; renewal; re-establishment; as the restoration of friendship between enemies, the restoration of peace after war.   **An Apology** **A) Something** **said or written in defense** or **justification** of what appears to others to be wrong, or B) an **acknowledgement intended as atonement** for some improper act.  **Apologize:** (make an apology) – A) to **make a defense** or excuse. (from which we get the word “Apologetics”)  **or** B) to **make acknowledgement** of some fault or offense, **with expression of regret** for it by way of amends. |

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| **A Mere Apology versus Seeking Forgiveness and Restoration** Wording is important!  **Not** **“I’m sorry”** - you might be sorry you got caught, you might be sorry they got offended, but not sorry for the sin you committed.  You might be sorry they feel differently than you regarding this issue… **Not “I apologize” -** you could just be making defense of your action, or just seeking absolution. An apology may be accepted or it may not be. An accepted apology is an acknowledgment of the statement of the offender.  **A mere apology without seeking forgiveness; is an unresolved conflict**.  The momentary tension may pass, but the unresolved feelings or issues will continue bubbling beneath the surface to re-surface at a later date.   A mere apology is postponed or delayed resolution (a squandered opportunity to make things right between you and another person). A mere apology undermines and prevents complete restoration. **“No problem” is not the same as “I Forgive You.”**  **Seeking Forgiveness** Wording is important. **“Will You Please Forgive Me FOR**:"   1) **State** the offense specifically 2) **Admit** the wicked motive that produced the offense 3) **Regret - Express** **the regret** that repentance requires 4) **Commit - Express the commitment to change**: your sinful motive, **and** the course of conduct that resulted in the offense (producing the fruit of repentance). Example:  **Will you please forgive me for** taking your sandwich from the refrigerator? I saw your name on it – but I was hungry and took it anyway.  I guess that makes it stealing.  Will you please forgive me for stealing from you?   Notice this fully admits not just the wrong action, but the true sin the offense represents. Sincerely seeking forgiveness means you don’t defend your actions, but instead, you fully admit and take ownership of them.  Hunger is irrelevant.  Being hungry doesn’t give you the right to steal their sandwich.   Then **restitution** may be in order.  “I will buy you a new sandwich for tomorrow, I want to make this right.”   **Forgiveness Granted** Wording is important. **“I forgive you.”** **Forgiveness granted** is the **complete closure** of the apology – **the remaining half** of the equation.  It means the offended relinquishes their right to continue to hold the offense against the offender.   And restoration of the relationship can now begin.  **What Does God Do?**  **I John 1:9** - If we confess our sins, he is **faithful** and just to **forgive us** our sins and **cleanse us** from all unrighteousness. **Psalms 103:12** - As far as the east is from the west, so far has he **removed our transgressions** from us. **Isaiah 43:25** - I, even I, am He who **blots out your transgressions**, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more. I, yes I alone, will blot out your sins **for my own sake** and will never think of them again (NLT) **Micah 7:19-20** - Who is a God like you, who **pardons our sin** and **forgives the transgression** of the remnant of his inheritance?  You do not stay angry forever but **delight to show mercy**.  You will **again have compassion** on us; and will **tread our sins underfoot** and **cast all** our iniquities into the depths of the sea.  **Hebrews 8:12** - For I will forgive their wickedness and will **remember their sins no more**. |

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