

## ENCOUNTERING JESUS PRAYER TRAINING

### SESSION TWO: THE IMPORTANCE OF FORGIVENESS

**FORGIVENESS** is **FOUNDATIONAL**, perhaps the single most important factor in healing. It is exactly what Jesus teaches His disciples in Matthew 6:12,14 – “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us...if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” **FORGIVENESS** brings reconciliation not only to relationships, but to our body, soul and spirit. When we hold onto unforgiveness, which is not of God, there is part of our heart that is hard and not yielded to Jesus. If unforgiveness persists, healing is blocked and restoration is not possible.

**FORGIVENESS** is in three parts: **RECEIVED FROM GOD; OFFERED TO OTHERS; EXTENDED TO OURSELVES**. When Jesus died on the cross, His focus was outward, even in the midst of His own incomprehensible suffering. He said to the thief next to Him, “Today you will be with Me in paradise.” Jesus gave **GRACE** to those who accused Him; He **SUBMITTED** His own pain to God; He asked God to **FORGIVE US!** This is our model for forgiveness. **When we forgive others, we FREE both ourselves and them from RETAINING the sin.** We **RECEIVE** God’s forgiveness, freely **OFFER** it to others, and **EXTEND** it to ourselves, not retaining bitterness.

**FORGIVENESS must be from the HEART and not just from the HEAD.** It is the **RELEASE** of the offense that brings true and lasting healing. This is why we present **JESUS**. We ask Him to come into the emotion and help the Beloved to release it. Emphasize that this does not mean that the offender’s actions were justifiable; it means that you choose to release them from having control over you through replaying the hurt of the offense. Forgiveness enables you to go from being a victim to being victorious. Forgiveness is a decision, not an emotion – but in order for healing to come, there must be an encounter with Jesus that releases the painful emotion.

We use different types of forgiveness prayer for various circumstances:

**HEART TO HEART:** When there has been traumatic abuse, particularly in childhood, ask the Beloved if they are willing to let Jesus, the One who is the same yesterday, today and forever, visit the scene with them. **Ask them to pray a brief prayer of submission first, saying “Jesus, I submit to you my will, my rights, and all control. Come, Holy Spirit, come.”** Assuring them that they are in a safe place as Jesus is both within them and within you, ask them to go by the power of the Holy Spirit back to their first memory of that trauma. When they are in that place of memory, ask Jesus to come into the picture and reveal where He is to them. Sometimes they cannot see Him, but can sense or feel His presence. Wait until they have a specific impression of where He is, and then ask Jesus to give them a message from His heart.

When you see a connection between them and Jesus, ask if they can forgive the offender with Jesus' help. If so, pray a prayer of forgiveness and ask Jesus to forever secure this memory with His presence in the picture.

**HAND TO HAND:** When there is difficulty with unforgiveness that has persisted over time, especially when bitterness has set in, **ask the Beloved to take the hand of Jesus as He sits at the right hand of Father God. Assure the Beloved that Jesus is praying for them as He holds their hand. Then by the power of the Holy Spirit, ask them if they are willing to let Jesus extend His other hand to the one they have not been able to forgive. Ask Jesus to tell them how He sees them – and then how He sees the other person. Ask if they are willing to release the offender to Jesus as He holds both of their hands, making a circle of three. If so, pray a prayer of forgiveness and ask Jesus to take all of the hurt and remove it as far as the east is from the west. Ask if the Beloved would be willing to join their other hand to the hand of the offender while still holding the hand of Jesus. Pray a prayer of blessing over the offender (or over their memory, if they are no longer alive). Ask the Beloved what they now feel and what Jesus has to say.**

**SEVEN R's Prayer tool:** When there has been unforgiveness through a traumatic event and it has caused a physical ailment or affliction, ask the Beloved if you can lead them through these seven steps: **1) RECOGNIZE and name the emotion they are feeling and where it has settled in their body; 2) Name it as a spirit and RELEASE the offending spirit to Jesus, commanding it to go and handing it over to Him. Have them pray, "In Jesus' name, I recognize this emotion as a spirit and 3) REFUSE to have it as part of me anymore. I release this offensive spirit to Jesus. In exchange, I 4) RECEIVE from my heavenly Father His Spirit of (love, peace, joy, truth – whatever is opposite to the spirit that was dismissed). Now I choose to 5) REPENT of my unforgiveness and to offer my forgiveness to the one who offended me. I desire to 6) REFILL my heart with only those things that are of you, Jesus. 7) I ask you to RESTORE my soul as you have promised.**

After you have completed these steps, pray for healing of the physical affliction, leading the Beloved as they repeat after you: **"Jesus, thank you for removing the weight of unforgiveness from my soul and for replacing it with true forgiveness that brings every part of me into alignment with your will and ways. Now that there is no hindrance, come and heal my body. I thank you that by your stripes, I have been healed. Thank you, Jesus, for RESTORING MY SOUL!**

**SEVEN STEPS: RECOGNIZE- RELEASE – REFUSE – RECEIVE – REPENT – REFILL – RESTORE**

With physical healing, emphasize that it may be gradual and the Beloved should continue to thank Jesus for what He has already accomplished. The removal of the weight of unforgiveness

is often the greater healing, so even if physical healing is delayed or not apparent, Jesus has brought healing and restoration to the soul.

We are His disciples and His words apply to us today. Jesus said, "If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." John 20:23