



# **FRESH START**

Processing the Issues  
of Your Heart



# PROCESSING THE ISSUES OF YOUR HEART

A process in helping you resolve issues  
of offense, hurt and loss

**"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life."  
Proverbs 4:23 (NIV84)**

If YOUR heart was the only wellspring (drinking source) from which others could drink, how "healthy" would they be?

A sobering question, isn't it? Whose heart hasn't been affected by someone or something? But even if our wellspring has become "polluted" with unforgiveness or bitterness, we still can have a "fresh start" for our heart!

It is our prayer that as you *process the issues of your heart* by writing out your responses to the questions on the following pages, that you will be free from your past, not just survive, but thrive in the present, and look forward to a hope-filled future!

Also, please note **YOU can be FORGIVEN!** on page 20. For your process to lead to true freedom, and a *forgiven and forgiving lifestyle*, it will be imperative that you experience being **TRULY FORGIVEN** prior to **Part 5-FORGIVE**. Otherwise, you will not be able to give away what you have not received.

Remember, it's **NEVER TOO LATE!**

Forgiven, forgiving and free,

Pastor Steve and Mindy Peterson



**FRESH START**

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# Part 1: OFFENSE / HURT / LOSS

## **Who or what is in your Gap?**

The Gap is the difference between God's design for relationship and your life's experience.

## **WHO OR WHAT HAS OFFENDED OR HURT YOU? OR... WHO OR WHAT HAVE YOU LOST?**

*"Test me, O Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind..."*  
*Psalm 26:2 (NIV)*

Think about what that verse means to you and what you are asking the Lord to do as you pray the verse.

## **Begin by identifying areas of offense, hurt or loss in your life.**

### **(a) List specific offenses or hurts, and the person(s) involved:**

- People who have rejected you in some way, and how
- People or situations where you have been violated or abused
- Conflicts involving family, friends, work, church or others
- Divorce or separation
- Other

**(b) List significant losses that you have experienced in your life:**

- Loss of job
- Loss of health
- Loss of a relationship due to conflict, separation, divorce or death
- Loss of a dream for your life or your future involving marriage, children or career
- Other

**(c) From your previous responses, choose one person/loss to process.**

**List the offenses, hurts or loss regarding this person/loss.**

## Part 2: AFFECT

### What is in your heart?

#### **HOW HAVE YOU BEEN AFFECTED?**

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.” Psalm 139:23 (NIV)*

Think about what that verse means to you and what you are asking the Lord to do as you pray the verse.

#### **How has this specific offense, hurt or loss affected you?**

**(a) What have your thoughts been?**

**(b) What have your thoughts been toward the person involved (as applicable)?**

**(c) What have your feelings been?**

The following is a list of words to help you identify what you may be feeling in relationship to your specific offense, hurt or loss.

Abandoned	Dumb	Inadequate	Out of Control	Trapped
Angry	Erased	Inferior	Powerless	Ugly
Anxious	Failure	Insecure	Rage	Unclean
Betrayed	Fat	Invisible	Rejected	Unloved
Bitter	Fearful	Jealous	Resentful	Unprotected
Consumed	Guarded	Judged	Sad	Unwanted
Condemned	Guilty	Lonely	Shamed	Used
Depressed	Hate	Loser	Stuck	Victimized
Dirty	Helpless	Manipulated	Stupid	Voiceless
Distrustful	Hopeless	Not Valued	Tolerated	Worthless

**Using the words that you have circled above, or other words that apply, write out how this specific offense, hurt or loss has affected you.**

## Part 3: RESPONSE

### What have you decided?

#### **HOW HAVE YOU RESPONDED TO THIS SPECIFIC OFFENSE, HURT OR LOSS?**

*“See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:24 (NIV)*

Think about what that verse means to you and what you are asking the Lord to do as you pray the verse.

**(a) What have you said or thought in response to this offense, hurt or loss?** This may include things that you have said or thought about the person involved, yourself, God or the situation.



**(b) What have you done in response to the offense, hurt or loss?**

**(c) What have you decided?**

Include any judgments and vows you have made regarding the offending person, yourself or God, or the loss you have experienced.

## Part 4: POUR OUT YOUR HEART

**Go vertical!**

### **POUR OUT YOUR HEART TO THE LORD.**

*“Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to Him, for God is our refuge.” Psalm 62:8 (NIV)*

*“I cry aloud to the LORD; I lift up my voice to the LORD for mercy. I pour out my complaint before him; before him I tell my trouble.”  
Psalm 142:1-2 (NIV)*

**What do these verses mean to you?**

**(a) Pour out your heart to the Lord. Write in the space below exactly how you feel.**

Lord, this is how I feel...

**(b) Express your unmet desires to the Lord.**

Lord, this is what I'm disappointed or upset about, or wish would have happened (or not happened)...

**(c) Express your current desires to the Lord.**  
Lord, I desire...

**(d) Choose to give sacrificial thanks to the Lord.**

*“...give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIV)*

*“...always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 5:20 (NIV)*

*“Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High; call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.... He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; And to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God.” Psalm 50:14-15, 23 (NASB)*

*“I will sacrifice a thank offering to you and call on the name of the LORD.” Psalm 116:17 (NIV)*

*“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”  
1 Corinthians 1:18 (NIV)*

*“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son...” Romans 8:28-29 (NASB)*

**Tell the Lord in writing that you are giving sacrificial thanks for the situation and the circumstances, and that you are willing to submit to however He wants to use it in your life for His purposes, for your good, and for His glory.**

Lord, I choose to give sacrificial thanks for:

## Part 5: FORGIVE

### Cancel the debt!

## **FORGIVE THE ONE WHO HAS OFFENDED OR HURT YOU.**

### **The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant...**

“Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, ‘Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?’ Jesus answered, ‘I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. The servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’

**The servant’s master took pity on him,  
CANCELED THE DEBT and let him go.\***

But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. **‘Pay back what you owe me!’\*** he demanded. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’ But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened. Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.” (\*emphasis mine)

Matthew 18:21-35 (NIV84)

### **What do these verses mean to you?**



**(b) Choose to forgive the person who has offended or hurt you. Write out your prayer to the Lord expressing your decision to forgive.**

**Include the specifics of those hurts or offenses and how they have affected you in the past, are affecting you in the present, and may affect you in the future.**



**(c) Declare to the Lord:**

**“I cancel the debt! For my sake, they owe me nothing!”**

## Part 6: RELEASE

### Let God handle it!

#### **RELEASE THE OFFENSE, HURT OR LOSS TO THE LORD!**

*"Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall. But you, O God, will bring down the wicked into the pit of corruption; bloodthirsty and deceitful men will not live out half their days. But as for me, I trust in you." Psalm 55:22-23 (NIV)*

*"Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is Mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord. On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Romans 12:16-21 (NIV)*

*"...and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously." 1 Peter 2:23 (NASB)*

#### **What do these verses mean to you?**

##### **(a) Entrust the person and/or the situation to the Lord.**

Write, in the form of a prayer, who or what you are now entrusting to the Lord.

**(b) Bless and pray for the person who has offended or hurt you.**

*“Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing....’” Luke 23:34 (NIV)*

*“But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you...” Matthew 5:44 (NKJV)*

**(c)“Lord, will you please help me to take my thoughts captive to obey You? From this point forward, I choose to renew my mind according to Romans 12:2.”**

Express to the Lord in prayer your desire to actively live out the truth God has shown you in your process.

*“We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,”*  
*2 Corinthians 10:5 (NASB1995)*

*“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”*  
*Romans 12:2 (NASB)*

*“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.”*  
*Psalms 19:14 (NIV)*

----- NOTES -----

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# YOU can be FORGIVEN!

**Being FORGIVEN by GOD is all about a CHANGE of heart - turning from “me first” to “Jesus First”.**

*“...But unless you repent, you too will all perish.” Luke 13:3 (NIV)*

If I am sorry that my “me first” choices have led to painful consequences, and my focus is on my misery, the Bible would call that worldly sorrow. But, if my attitude is one of conviction of my wrong - the wrong of putting myself first, regardless of the consequences, the Bible would call this godly sorrow.

## **How to be FORGIVEN...**

- **Confess whatever forms of "me first" you have identified:** pride, jealousy, ungratefulness, unforgiveness, and the right to run your own life...
- **Acknowledge that you have been wrong and sinned against GOD** - in all of the ways that “me first” has been expressed in thought, word, or deed in your life (be specific)...

*"Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death." II Corinthians 7:10 (NIV)*

- **Tell God you are repenting** - (turning from) of all of these sins... and **Ask God to forgive you** - for each and every one of these sins...

*"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9 (NIV)*

- **Declare to God that you are totally yielding to Him as your Lord** - to make any changes He wants to make in your life.
- **Thank Him for His forgiveness and for His new life in you!**  
*"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." Romans 10:9-10 (NIV)*

- **Now, you can FORGIVE... as you have been FORGIVEN!**  
*"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)*





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