



# WORDS TO LIVE BY

## Week 3

### BREAKING THE ICE

- If you were a talk show host, who would be your first guest?
- If you could move anywhere else in the world where would it be and why?

### MAIN CONTENT

Do you ever have those moments where you replay conversations or situations in your head when someone hurt you and you think about what you should've said? David Nasser defined forgiveness for us by saying it is simply allowing love to prosper by letting go.

“Love prospers when a fault is forgiven, but dwelling on it separates close friends.” - Proverbs 17:9 NLT

As we walk through forgiveness, we need to remember a few things. First off, forgiveness doesn't mean that we have spiritual amnesia and forget the hurt that someone has caused us. Trust is built slowly, so it is okay to not forget what someone has done.

Second, forgiveness is not fair. This one is hard for some of us, because we wish so bad for things to end up being fair in this realm of forgiveness, but think about it – if God was fair, the crazy grace of Jesus wouldn't make any sense. Jesus dying for ALL OF US isn't fair for the debt of sin, but here we are, covered by the blood of Jesus so that God sees us white as snow. If you are waiting for forgiveness to be fair, you will be waiting forever.

Third, forgiveness is not final. When we choose to forgive someone, in that moment it can feel so freeing! Then down the line, you see them or hear about them and suddenly some anger rises up in us. This is because forgiveness needs to happen every single time that feeling rises up in us.

1. Does it feel different to forgive someone depending on the level of trust you had with them? Why do you think that is?
2. Have you ever been in a situation that you felt was unfair? How did you feel about that?
3. Has there been a situation where you thought you forgave someone but then those feelings or thoughts came back later on?

David went on to let us know that forgiveness is important because it allows us to heal and rest. When we have a relationship that is broken it can get in the way of all other relationships, including our relationship with God. We can start building what he described as a “spite house”. Imagine someone who has a beautiful multimillion dollar oceanfront property with windows overlooking the water, but there is a very small sliver of land right in front of them and the sand with nothing on it. The land owner of the small sliver of land tries to sell it to the man who owns the home for one million dollars, but he refuses to buy it. So, out of spite, the man who owns the sliver of land builds the skinniest home to block the view of the other man’s home. He has to live in a home that is only fifty-five inches wide inside. The man with this sliver of land thinks he has a dwelling of justice, when in fact, it is a prison he built for himself.

When we choose to not forgive someone because we think we have a right to not forgive them, we are choosing to live in a “spite house”, waiting to let go until we deem the situation to be fair, but fair is never coming. We want to choose to forgive because that is when love can prosper in all of our relationships.

4. Have you ever built a “spite house” in your life because of being hurt by someone?
5. In what relationships do you hope to see love prosper in future?

David left us with some very practical steps to be able to walk through forgiveness. First off, identify the wound. Get detailed and specific as you think about how that person wronged you.

Second, figure out what is owed. After being hurt, what do you think is owed to you from that situation? List it out how you need to.

Third, figure out who is paying. Some people who have hurt you may not be interested or able to pay back what is owed to you. In moments like that, could you allow Jesus to enter the room and hand Him the list of what is owed so He can take the bill?

6. Is it easy for you to identify when a person hurts you and what you are owed because of that hurt?

7. When you think of writing out a list of what your owed and giving that to Jesus, how does that make you feel or how would you picture that in your own life?

If we look at our lives, we may see that there is something hindering us from loving others well because of unforgiveness. It's up to us to reflect on who we may need to forgive and then let it go so that we can allow love to prosper in all areas of our lives.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, thank you so much that forgiveness isn't fair. Thank you that your sacrifice covers a multitude of sins, including my own and others. Holy Spirit please open our hearts and eyes to see the unforgiveness we may have for others in our lives and give us the courage to face it head on. Thank you for how you care so deeply about love prospering in our lives. Give us the strength to walk through forgiveness as it comes up. We are so thankful for your mercy and grace. We love you. In Jesus' name, amen.

## ACTION STEP

- Pray and ask Jesus who you may need to forgive and then follow these steps:
  - Identify the wound
  - Write up what is owed
  - Pray and ask for Jesus to take it
- Come spend Easter at Cross Point with us and invite others to join you:  
[crosspoint.tv/easter](http://crosspoint.tv/easter)
- If you don't already serve on a volunteer team, we'd love for you to consider getting involved before Easter to help even more people find and follow Jesus:  
[crosspoint.tv/getinvolved](http://crosspoint.tv/getinvolved)