

Apologies and Forgiveness

Guidelines for a good apology:

1. Take responsibility for the damage you caused
2. Make your apology personal
3. Make your apology specific
4. Make your apology deep (apologize for the whole truth of what you did)
5. Make your apology heartfelt
6. Make your apology clean (no buts or qualifications)
7. Apologize repeatedly

Forgiveness

- There is only one unforgivable sin and it is against the Holy Spirit
- Forgiveness is a process and may have to be done many times for the same thing
- Forgiveness is not forgetting
- Forgiveness means no longer requiring something of the person who wronged you regarding the offense for which you are forgiving
- Forgiveness is needed for hurts that are personal, unfair, and deep
- Forgiveness is needed when we hate (hate only wants revenge, not to make things better)
- We heal as we see the hurts and imperfections of the one who hurt us. They are human.
- Sometimes we come together again and sometimes not.

Steps to Forgiveness:

1. Clearly identify the issue to be forgiven.
2. Determine how often you will get together to work on the issue.
3. Talk about how you feel and how you have been affected by the issue.
4. The one who committed the offense asks for forgiveness.
5. The hurt person offers forgiveness.
6. The one who committed the offense demonstrates a change in beliefs and actions that allowed the offense to happen.
7. The person who committed the offense agrees to make reparation for the offense.
8. If possible, reconciliation occurs.
9. Both people move on in life.

The above material is adapted from the works of Janis Abrahms Spring, Lewis Smeades, Beverly Flanigan, and Fred Luskin.