



## Katrina's Lesson Re-Cap| 02/09/2025| Forgiveness & Restoration Lesson 1

### I. Introduction & Overview

Katrina opened by acknowledging that while her sister had previously addressed forgiveness, her heart was especially burdened by the topic of **reconciliation**—what it means for a believer to truly “make things right.” She set the stage by emphasizing that although many of us have heard these topics repeatedly, God now wants to reveal them to us in a fresh, deeper way. Her recurring call was: “**Stop being basic.**” In other words, don’t settle for the minimum (the “milk”), but allow God to move you into a deeper, more mature practice of your faith.

### II. Foundational Scriptures on Forgiveness

#### A. Matthew 6:14–15 (NIV)

“For 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.”

- **Key Point:**

Forgiveness is not optional. It is a command from Jesus, linking our willingness to forgive others with the forgiveness we receive from our Father. Katrina stressed that if you struggle to forgive, you are, in effect, calling out to God for help because your heart is still holding on to bitterness.

#### B. Colossians 3:13 (NIV)

“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”

- **Key Point:**

Forgiveness is modeled on the forgiveness we’ve received from God. Even when someone has wronged you deeply, the command is clear: forgive—just as the Lord forgave you. The verse reinforces that forgiveness is a spiritual discipline fundamental to our relationship with God.

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**Hebrews 5:11-14; 6:1-3**  
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### III. Moving Beyond the Basics: Spiritual Maturity

#### A. Hebrews 5:11–14 (NIV)

**“We have much to say, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though by the time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.**

- **Key Point:**

Katrina used the passage to illustrate that if you’re still struggling with forgiving—if you’re stuck on the “milk” of basic teachings—you are not moving into the “solid food” of maturity. In other words, clinging to elementary practices (or failing to forgive) indicates you haven’t yet grown into the deeper mysteries of God.

#### B. Hebrews 6:1–2 (NIV)

**“Therefore, let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about cleansing, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.”**

- **Key Point:**

Forgiveness (like baptism, healing, and even resurrection) is part of the basic, foundational teaching. Katrina emphasized that if you’re still clinging to these elementary truths and struggling with forgiving, it is a sign that your spiritual journey has stalled, you’re caught on the basics instead of moving forward into deeper growth.

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### IV. Defining Forgiveness vs. Reconciliation

#### A. Forgiveness

- **Definition:**

Forgiveness is the personal act of releasing resentment, anger, bitterness, and the burden of hurt. It does not depend on the other person's apology or repentance.

- **Scriptural Example:**

- **Luke 23:34 (NIV):**

When Jesus was on the cross, He prayed,

**“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”**  
Even before anyone repented, Jesus initiated forgiveness. Her example teaches that forgiving is a divine mandate even when it seems undeserved.

- **Practical Application:**

You must forgive those who have hurt you—even if they never ask for forgiveness. Holding on to unforgiveness hinders your spiritual growth and keeps you from fully experiencing God's grace.

#### B. Reconciliation

- **Definition:**

Reconciliation goes a step further is the process of restoring a broken relationship. It requires both parties to participate: the offended must forgive, and the offender must take responsibility and often show evidence of change. Reconciliation involves rebuilding trust and setting healthy boundaries.

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- **Scriptural Examples:**

- **Joseph and His Brothers (Genesis 45):**

Joseph forgave his brothers for selling him into slavery, but he did not immediately restore their previous relationship. Instead, he tested their hearts to see if they had truly changed before he reconciled with them. His story shows that while forgiveness is immediate and personal, reconciliation requires a transformation of heart.

- **Peter's Restoration (John 21:15–17):**

After denying Jesus, Peter was given a chance to reaffirm his love for Christ. Jesus' repeated questioning ("Do you love me?") wasn't just about forgiveness—it was about restoring their relationship, indicating that true reconciliation sometimes needs a visible change of heart.

- **Key Point:**

While forgiveness is unconditional (you must forgive regardless of the offender's response), reconciliation is conditional and involves mutual participation. It may not always be possible or safe, and sometimes forgiveness must occur without the promise of restored closeness.

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## V. The Challenge & Call to Action

Katrina made several powerful, personal observations:

- **Forgiveness Is Basic—but Not Optional:**

Just as baptism, healing, and even resurrection are fundamental elements of our faith, forgiveness is non-negotiable. You're commanded to forgive, even if it means repeatedly forgiving the same person until your heart aligns with God's will.

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- **No More “Minimum Effort” in Our Spiritual Lives:**

Many believers settle for the basics without moving into a deeper, sacrificial relationship with God. Whether it's forgiving an unrepentant spouse, family member, or friend, true discipleship means stepping up—even when it's inconvenient or painful.

- **Personal Sacrifice Leads to Spiritual Growth:**

Just as training your body to eat “solid food” (healthy, mature practices) requires sacrifice and persistence (like eating vegetables you might not crave), growing in your ability to forgive and reconcile demands a deliberate, daily commitment to follow God's instructions.

- **Practical Steps:**

1. **Self-Examination:** Ask yourself if you are stuck on the “milk” of basic forgiveness or if you've moved into the “solid food” of mature, sacrificial love.
2. **Prayer and Dependence on the Spirit:** Remember that the same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you to empower you to forgive.
3. **Healthy Boundaries in Reconciliation:** Recognize that while forgiveness is always required, reconciliation is a process that involves change and may require setting boundaries to protect your heart.

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## VI. Conclusion

Katrina's passionate plea was clear:

- **Forgive Unconditionally:**

Forgiveness must flow from your heart, whether or not the offender is willing to change. As Jesus showed on the cross, forgive even when it seems impossible.

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### **Katrina's Lesson Re-Cap| 02/09/2025| Forgiveness & Restoration Lesson 1**

- **Pursue Maturity:**

Do not be content with the basics. Let God transform you so that you not only know the elementary truths of forgiveness and reconciliation but also live them out in deeper, more transformative ways.

- **Reconciliation, When Possible:**

Understand that true reconciliation is a two-way street that may not always be fully attainable. But even if a relationship cannot be fully restored, your heart must be free of unforgiveness.

Let this lesson challenge you to move beyond the “basic” level. Embrace God’s call to forgive fully and, when safe and appropriate, work toward genuine reconciliation that reflects the character of Christ.

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*Remember: The command to forgive is rooted in our own need for God’s forgiveness. As you walk in obedience, you will experience the healing, freedom, and deeper relationship that comes from living out God’s truth.*