

The Ultimate Proof of Total Forgiveness

That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. -2 Corinthians 5:19

The ultimate proof of total forgiveness takes place when we sincerely petition the Father to let those who have hurt us off the hook—even if they have hurt not only us, but also those close to us.

I had come face-to-face with this reality, so I prayed for certain people to be forgiven. However, after a few moments, it was as if the Lord said to me, "Do you know what you are asking Me to do?"

I thought I knew the answer to His question, so I said, "Yes."

He then seemed to reply, "Are you now asking Me to set them free as if they had done nothing wrong?"

That sobered me! I needed some time to think, but while I pondered His words, the Lord reminded me of the many sins for which He had forgiven me. I became frightened of the possibility that He might reveal—or let come out—some of the terrible things I had done.

I then humbly prayed, "Yes, Lord, I ask You to forgive them."

Once more I needed a little time. Then the Lord seemed to say, "What if I forgive and bless you, RT, in proportion to how you want Me to forgive and bless them?"

By this time I was boxed in a corner, and I surrendered. I began to sincerely pray for them to be forgiven and blessed as though they had caused me no offense. But I cannot truly say that my prayer was particularly godly or unselfish.

This is, after all, the message of the New Testament: “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).

What impresses the world most is changed lives for which there is no natural explanation.

Excerpted from *Total Forgiveness* (Charisma House, 2002).