

12 STEPS TO FORGIVENESS

In his book, *Victory Over Darkness*, Neil T. Anderson offers these twelve steps to walk through the process of forgiveness (adapted from original):

THE LIVING ROOM

WITH JOANNA WEAVER

- 1** Ask God to reveal the names of people who have offended you, the specific wrongs you suffered and how they made you feel.
- 2** Face the hurt and the hate. If you are going to forgive from your heart, you must let God search the depths of your heart (Matthew 18:35).
- 3** Acknowledge the significance of the cross. It is the cross of Christ that makes forgiveness legally and morally right (Colossians 2:13-14).
- 4** Decide that you will not retaliate by using the information about the offender's sin against them (Luke 6:27-34)
- 5** Decide to forgive. Forgiveness is a conscious choice to let the other person off the hook and free yourself from the past (1 Corinthians 13:5).
- 6** Take your list of names to God and pray the following: "I forgive _____ (name) for _____ (list offenses and how they made you feel)."
- 7** Destroy the list. You are now free. Do not tell the offenders what you have done. Your forgiveness is between you and God, unless the offenders have asked you for forgiveness (Proverbs 19:11).
- 8** Do not expect that your decision to forgive will result in major changes in the other persons. Instead, pray for them (Matthew 5:44).
- 9** Try to understand the people you have forgiven, but don't rationalize their sin. It could lead to incomplete forgiveness.
- 10** Freedom is a result of forgiveness in you. In time, you will be able to think about the people who offended you without feeling hurt or anger.
- 11** Thank God for the lessons you have learned and the maturity you have gained (Romans 8:28-29).
- 12** When appropriate, accept your part of the blame for the offenses you suffered. Confess your failure to God (1 John 1:9) and to others (James 5:16). If someone has something against you, you must go to that person (Matthew 5:23-26).