

## Restoring Your Heart and Forgiveness

**People often ask WDA to give a Biblical basis for the Restoring Your Heart (RYH) ministry. One of the simplest explanations is that the RYH process helps people understand and move towards forgiveness.**

Forgiveness is not optional for the Christian. We are commanded to forgive those who have hurt us (Matthew 6:14-15, 18:21-22, 35; Mark 11:25; Luke 6:37; Ephesians 4:32). There are good reasons that God commands us to forgive. One reason is that unforgiveness can cause problems in our relationship with God Himself (Matthew 6:14-15). Also, when we don't forgive people, our hurt causes us to be emotionally trapped or stuck. Forgiveness removes barriers not only between us and God but also between ourselves and other people.

What is often not well understood is that forgiveness is a process. When people make the choice to forgive someone, it is an act of will. However, the Bible tells us to forgive from the heart (Matthew 18:35). How do we do that? First, we must fully acknowledge the extent of our hurt and not just bury those feelings or pretend that we are okay. Second, we must process those emotions by grieving our hurts. Once we have done that, we can fully forgive from our hearts.

In RYH, we experientially teach people how to reach forgiveness by walking them through a grieving process. After processing their pain in a healing group of people, they can come to a point of fully forgiving those who have hurt them. It is sometimes necessary for a person to forgive God and/or themselves as well. Removing the barrier of unforgiveness will improve our relationships, both with God and with others.

Forgiveness is a command, a choice, and a process. RYH gives us the means to move through the process of forgiveness after obeying the command and making the choice. There are other ways to explain a Biblical basis for RYH but learning how to forgive is probably one of the most important and freeing results.