LWCC Marriage Email for June – 2026

Forgiveness In Marriage: Part 1 - The Why!

Greetings to you all from the Danube. I am putting the finishing touches to this email sitting aboard our cruise ship berthed in Budapest, on a very hot 34degree with not a cloud in sight. Google tells me that Christchurch is currently experiencing 3-7 degrees with light rain. I trust it doesn't dampen the spirits too much, and that, as always, some will find what follows helpful.

Four or Five days after Colleen Doyle's amazing message at LWCC in mid-January on Forgiveness, I came across an article from XO Marriage on a similar theme, and thought maybe it's time to consider this important issue again, in relation to its application for us in married life.

It doesn't take long in married life to realize that every marriage faces moments of disappointment, hurt and sometimes, even conflict. No matter how much love there is in the relationship, misunderstandings and mistakes are inevitable when two imperfect people share life together. But one of the most powerful tools God has given to a couple to help navigate these bumps is Forgiveness. It's more than just a word—it's an essential ingredient for a thriving, lasting relationship.

Forgiving your spouse may not always feel easy, but it's so necessary. Before we look at How, let's consider for a few moments, Why.

1. Forgiveness Breaks the Cycle of Resentment:

When hurt feelings go unaddressed or are allowed to fester, they can build into a wall of resentment. Without forgiveness, even the smallest offences can snowball, leading to distance, resentment and eventually bitterness. Forgiveness breaks this destructive cycle, allowing you and your spouse to reconnect and heal rather than drift apart.

2. It Fosters Emotional Intimacy:

Forgiving doesn't mean forgetting or excusing bad behaviour, but it does create space for vulnerability. When we forgive, we're choosing to let go of the grudge and open ourselves up emotionally. This act of grace fosters a deeper connection, because it says, "I love you enough to work through this." The more often forgiveness is practised, the stronger your emotional bond becomes.

3. Forgiveness Reflects Grace:

In marriage there's three amazing words - Grace, Trust and Love. Grace and Trust should flow as freely as Love, and it's in forgiveness that the three have their moment to shine together. Forgiveness reflects Grace, allows Trust to be Restored, and Love to Flourish. Just as we receive forgiveness for our own mistakes, we are called to extend it to our spouse. Holding onto hurt not only damages the trust factor in our relationship, but it can weigh us down emotionally and spiritually. Offering forgiveness, even when it's hard, reflects the grace we hope to receive in return.

4. It Promotes Healing Over Time:

Forgiveness certainly doesn't magically erase pain, but it does set the stage for healing. Holding onto anger or hurt keeps wounds fresh. However, when you make the choice to forgive, you're

choosing to prioritize healing and growth. Over time, forgiveness can soften the hurt, rebuild trust, and remind you both of the bigger picture—your love and commitment to one another is bigger than the enemies attempt to use his 'wrecking ball'.

5. Forgiveness Strengthens Trust:

When you forgive your spouse, it sends a message that your relationship is bigger than the offence. It says that your commitment to each other is worth fighting for. This then hugely strengthens that trust. *Your spouse knows they are **safe** with you, **even** when mistakes are made*. Trust is essential for any healthy marriage, and forgiveness is one way to restore and reinforce it.

6. It Helps You Let Go of Control:

Sometimes we hold onto our hurts and grudges because it gives us a sense of control. But this control is an illusion. In reality, it keeps us stuck in a place of negativity, and impacts the trust factor. By forgiving, you release the need to control or punish your spouse. You're saying, "We are a team, and we'll face this together." This mindset creates a healthier dynamic and encourages cooperation over competition.

7.Forgiveness is a Gift:

Forgiving your spouse is one of the greatest gifts you can give them—and yourself. It allows you both to move forward, free from the weight of past hurts. It's not always easy, but it is worth it. And if you've been the recipient of your spouse's forgiveness there's only two words you need in response - "***Thank you".*** Nothing else, no but....; nothing..... just "Thank You". Appreciate, in the process, that in most cases, this gift has come with ***Great Price!!!***

When you choose to forgive, you're choosing love, connection, and growth. And that is the Foundation of a strong, healthy marriage. It won't fix everything overnight, but it sets you on the right path toward healing, and strengthening your relationship. Whether it's a small disagreement or a more significant hurt, forgiving your spouse is a powerful act of love that can truly transform your marriage.

Now that we've considered the Why, next month we will look carefully at the how, because, as I'm sure some of you have discovered, so often there's more to it than just saying, "I Forgive You".

Blessings again from your Marriage Ministries Team: Stan & Ronnie, John & Karen, Phil & Mel.

(Adapted From an Article by XO Marriage)