

## City Recovery

**Step 4: Make a continuous effort to live in the forgiveness Jesus has given us while forgiving those who have hurt or offended us.**

Once we have begun to surrender and allow ourselves to trust God we can hear His Holy Spirit with more clarity and direction. He can show us the pain, addiction, regret, offense or other sin we've been carrying, some of which we may not have even realized were there.

Let's allow Him to begin guiding us through the next step.

**Step Four will start us on the path of freely giving and receiving forgiveness, as well as staying free of offense.**

### **Psalm 139:23-24**

*“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”*

After turning our lives over to Christ we should work to remain in His will and on the path of freedom. However, we can easily become tripped up (or triggered) by past hurts and regrets, even when we're confident those things have already been forgotten or put to rest. Not just what's been done to us, but maybe harm we've caused others.

1. What are some of the biggest hurts and regrets that tend to resurface regularly?

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2. Now try to list a few of the small, sneaky ones that aren't so easy to catch. They sometimes come in the form of "hurt feelings" or things you "just can't forgive yourself for." What about the ones you "can forgive, but can't forget"?

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3. Take time and begin to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any hurts, offenses or regrets you're holding onto or any that don't surface enough to identify them. Those that are hidden underneath can sometimes cause the most damage.

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It is sometimes extremely difficult to offer forgiveness, especially when we feel entitled to that offense or hurt that we're not letting go of. Held on long enough, it can take root in your heart.

**Ezekiel 36:26-27**

*"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."*

1. Once the Holy Spirit has brought awareness of pain or offense we're holding on to, we need help letting it go. We're not born with the heart we need to forgive others the way Jesus forgives us, but He is faithful & He will guide us into peace through forgiveness.

Write a prayer asking God to remove any stone walls you've built around your heart & ask Him to replace them with love & mercy.

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