

Rising Above An Inadequate Amends

Amends is NOT “I’m sorry, baby.”

Amends is both apology (“I was wrong when I....”) and restitution.

The Nature of Forgiveness

- Forgiveness is transferring a case to a higher court.
- Forgiveness is NOT the same as “just forget it”.
- Forgiveness is a decision; it is NOT a feeling.

Offenders Beware

- Remember: this isn’t about you; it is not the “offendeds” job to make you feel better.
- The offender should expect nothing in return.

The Offended

- Beware of an offender who makes it all about “them”.
- Beware of an offender who uses an amends to attempt to elicit an amends.
- Forgiveness is allowing the amends process to proceed – that’s all.
- Once a case is transferred, it stays transferred.
- Do not confuse the amends process with the responsibility we all have to choose our friends wisely.

The Apology

*After burying Jacob, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had accompanied him to his father’s burial. But now that their father was dead, Joseph’s brothers became **fearful**. “Now Joseph will show his anger and pay us back for all the wrong we did to him,” they said.*

So they sent this message to Joseph: “Before your father died, he instructed us to say to you: ‘Please forgive your brothers for the great wrong they did to you – for their sin in treating you so cruelly.’ So we, the servants of the God of your father, beg you to forgive our sin.” When Joseph received the message, he broke down and wept.

What made this apology harmful? Why did Joseph weep?

Restitution

Then his brothers came and threw themselves down before Joseph, “Look, we are your slaves!” they said.

Why might Joseph have taken offense at this form of restitution?

But Joseph replied, “Don’t be afraid of me. Am I god, that I can punish you? You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people. No, don’t be afraid. I will continue to take care of you and your children.” So he reassured them by speaking kindly to them.

“Soon I will die,” Joseph told his brothers, “but God will surely come to help you and lead you out of this land of Egypt. He will bring you back to the land he solemnly promised to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”