

Dear Bonnie,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You told us that you were divorced twice due to physical abuse. One such abuse even put you in a wheelchair. You wondered if there was forgiveness for such doings considering the situation.

Yes, there is forgiveness providing the person asking forgiveness is truly repentant. There are many scriptures that indicate that God forgives all manner of sin and shows mercy to the sinner. "Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD'-and you forgave the guilt of my sin." (Psalm 32:5) "If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O LORD, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared." (Psalm 130:3-4) "Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon." (Isaiah 55:7)

The above scriptures are clear that God forgives provided the sinner is repentant. Repentance means changing one's mind and actions for the better. Without a positive change of direction, there is no real repentance and, therefore, no forgiveness by God. However, if there is real repentance and God has forgiven the sinner, there are still consequences for the sin. These consequences are necessary for learning to take place. One story of betrayal and forgiveness is found in Matthew 26:69-75 and John 21:15-19. It begins with Peter denying Jesus three times and ends with Jesus reinstating Peter when he asks Peter three times, "Do you love me?" Each time he tells Peter to "feed my sheep" thereby canceling out the sin by the action of telling Peter to do now what he was called to do. This is a beautiful story that illustrates the cost of forgiveness and the importance of fixing what we broke.

Is there forgiveness for your ex-husband who inflicted such pain upon you? Yes, God will grant forgiveness to him provided he is truly repentant. Should you also forgive him? The scriptures are clear that you should, even if he is not repentant or has not asked for forgiveness. "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." (Matthew 6:14-15) "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." (Luke 6:37) How thankful we are that God is the ultimate judge of each of us!

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at www.christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio