

When Sorry Isn't Enough Talk About It

Chapter 1

Righting Wrongs

Here are a number of questions designed to spark interaction and stimulate thought. Share these with your spouse or close friend or in a small group, or use them for personal reflection.

Discuss the author's observation, "People are incurably moral." Agree? Disagree?

Share a story you've heard or experience you've had showing humankind's "amazing capacity to forgive."

Those we care about most are those most affected by our apologies. Who are the people in your life who will be most affected by your learning in the area of apology?

Talk About It

Chapter 2

“I’m Sorry” Expressing Regret

Have you had childhood experiences similar to those described at the beginning of this chapter? Is there anyone from your past that you would like to say “I’m sorry” to?

Have you ever hurt someone without realizing it? What did you do when you became aware that you had hurt someone? What would most people say they are looking for in an apology?

Talk About It

Chapter 3

“I Was Wrong” Accepting Responsibility

Name a few of the most outrageous excuses you have heard people claim for refusing to admit wrong. Why do you think these people had such a difficult time admitting a wrongful act?

This chapter teaches that we often believe, “To admit that we are wrong is perceived as weakness.” How does it make you feel to admit that you were wrong?

When was a time you felt you had done nothing wrong, yet someone expected an apology? How did you respond?

Talk About It

Chapter 4

“How Can I Make It Right?” Making Restitution

What do you think of courts offering large sums of money for reparative damages? When do you feel the awarded amounts become excessive?

This chapter suggests there is a voice within us that cries out for those who have wronged us to pay for their act. In what ways has this been true in your life? How have you sensed the need for another person to “pay for” his or her offense against you?

Speaking someone’s love language is central in making restitution successful. Of the five love languages (words of affirmation, acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, and physical touch), which is most important to you? Why do you think this is the case?

Talk About It

Chapter 5

“I Want to Change” Genuinely Repenting

Name some of the differences you have noticed between men and women when they apologize. Where do you think these differences come from?

This chapter defines repentance as “to turn around” or “to change one’s mind.” In what other ways have you heard repentance defined? What do you think of the idea that repentance includes the concept of “I’ll try not to do that again”?

Talk about a time when you wanted your spouse (or other person close to you) to not just apologize but change their behavior. What happened?

Talk About It

Chapter 6

“Can You Find It in Your Heart . . .” Requesting Forgiveness

When was a time you thought you had apologized for a situation but later discovered the other person didn't feel that you had apologized? What further action did you take in that situation?

Have you ever had to forgive—or ask for forgiveness? How did you feel?

How can we learn to offer forgiveness even in situations when the other person is unwilling or unable to request it?

Talk About It

Chapter 7

How Do You Say You're Sorry?

Which of the five apology languages are most important to you? Think about your closest friend. Which apology language do you think is most important to him or her?

Review the questions for discovering your primary love language. Which one do you find most helpful?

What do you personally desire most in an apology?

Talk About It

Chapter 8

What If You Don't Want to Apologize?

When was a time you chose to wait to apologize rather than doing it immediately? How did this affect the relationship?

"Why should I apologize when she's the one who started it?" said the man in the chapter. What would you say to him?

Many people form an "insensitive conscience" over time and no longer consider what they do as being wrong. How have you experienced this in your own life? In the lives of those close to you?

Talk About It

Chapter 9

Learning to Forgive

When do you find it most difficult to forgive someone? Why do you think this is the case?

Discuss the author's observation that "we are never separated from God's love, but our disobedience does separate us from His fellowship."

Why is it dangerous to forgive too easily?

Talk About It

Chapter 10

Healing Your Family Relationships

Have you ever experienced or observed a broken or damaged relationship in your family?

“Most siblings, in the process of growing up, do and say things that are hurtful to each other.” How have you dealt with that in your own life?

In what ways can writing an apology statement help in dealing with an emotional issue? Can you think of a time when writing out your apology would have better helped the situation?

Talk About It

Chapter 11

Choosing to Forgive Yourself

Why does it seem easier at times to forgive other people than to forgive ourselves? How have you seen this in your life?

Share an experience you have had in taking “positive steps” to overcome a challenge.

What do you think of the idea of talking with yourself about self-apology? Does it feel natural or awkward? How has your background influenced how you view this concept of self-talk?

Talk About It

Chapter 12

Truly Sorry, Truly Forgiven

Take some time to discuss some of the conflicts and ills in our society. How would “admitting wrong” help heal some of these ills?