



Forgive Them? But They Fired Me!

1.7.07 by Mike McLoughlin

Article:

Have you ever been fired? It's not fun.

I had just returned from a two-week vacation after twelve months of hard work planning and conducting the fund-raising campaign for our local United Way. I was the Executive Director. So I knew something was up when I heard this message on my answering machine:

"Mr. McLoughlin, we need you to come to the office of the Director of Personnel. Don't go to work. Please, just go straight to that office."

When I did, the Director of Personnel told me. Our twenty-one member Board held an emergency board meeting during my vacation. They decided that my services as Executive Director were no longer needed. I was escorted to my office, handed a file box, and asked to gather up my personal belongings as my escort watched. Then, I was escorted off the premises. I left my workplace in tears, completely undone and destroyed by the whole experience.

I was mad at myself for not seeing it coming. I was mad at the Board for the callous way they handled it. Most of all, I was mad at God. "What do I do now?" I asked him. His answer was simple: "[Forgive them.](#)"

What? How could I forgive such a huge bunch of hypocrites? After the way they treated me? No, I was going to sue them for wrongful termination! I wanted justice! I wanted to make them pay.

Of course, the volunteer Board would not pay any of the damages. The money would come from those United Way agencies. It would come from the proceeds of my own fund-raising campaign. I couldn't sue them. So I forgave them.

I wrote the Board a nice thank-you letter for letting me serve with the organization. I included a check for the upcoming campaign. I met with the new Executive Director when he arrived and oriented him for the next campaign.

Forgiveness is not about pretending. What happened was wrong and hurtful and unfair, but forgiveness does not hold grudges against the people or organization that caused me pain. Forgiveness is a choice to take the hurt, the bitterness, the offense, the evil out of circulation. It is a choice to [turn the other cheek](#) and [go the extra mile](#).

I wish I could say that, [like Job in the Bible](#), God restored to me everything that I lost through that experience. But to be honest, I have really struggled. I still sometimes feel disappointed with God. I had thought I was answering his call to go to the United Way and serve. It seemed like God set me up. How could he do that?

I still don't know all the answers to that question. But in all the pain and doubt, I learned the power of forgiveness. Yes, it was a difficult time, but as I walked in that forgiveness and released my emotions to God, he saved me from anger and bitterness. With God's help, I moved on with the rest of my life.

Read more of Mike McLoughlin at [Faith at Work Blog](#)