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Four Mile an Hour Walking on Peace Path of Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Theology Review Article

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ABSTRACT

This review article explores the concept of "Four Mile an Hour Walking" as a guiding metaphor for peacebuilding, drawing on biblical concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation. This notion encourages taking your time while engaging with neighbors, caregivers, and community members in order to create stronger ties based on empathy and compassion. "Sword into the sheath" is a metaphor that highlights the transformational potential of forgiveness and signifies the transition from conflict to dialogue. Drawing on biblical teachings, the essay illustrates how God's vision of peace inspires people to choose restorative and nonviolent methods in their interactions. The findings indicate that adopting a deliberate, introspective approach to relationships has two advantages: it fosters a culture of peace and increases community resilience. Caregivers are better equipped to promote group reconciliation, strengthen community ties, and assist in healing when they integrate these spiritual ideas. Ultimately, this essay promotes a route to peace that acknowledges both personal and societal wounds while actively seeking atonement through empathy and understanding.

INTRODUCTION

"The wise manage their wealth like a ship, while the affluent treat it as if it were a skirt," goes a Khmer proverb (Kiernan, 1976). In the context of peacebuilding, this adage serves as a sobering reminder of the importance of managing wealth with consideration and community focus (Doyle & Sambanis, 2000). Sustainable peace and social cohesion can be achieved through prudent resource management, but ignoring our shared responsibility can result in more disputes and inequality (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015). When it comes to issues of forgiveness, reconciliation, and peacebuilding, the Khmer proverb "The wise manage their wealth like a ship, while the affluent treat it as if it were a skirt" is a potent metaphor (Wheater, 1992). This insight emphasizes the value of accountability and stewardship in reestablishing social harmony (Contrafatto, 2014).

The Peace Path's four-mile-per-hour walking pace represents the path of forgiveness and reconciliation, with each step signifying our dedication to personal and societal healing (Kalayjian & Paloutzian, 2009; Tint, 2009). As a spiritual and physical journey, this path encourages us to interact deeply with one another and strengthens bonds within the community (Manyimo, 2011). With its emphasis on the virtues of compassion, love, and unity, the Bible provides significant insights into this journey (Greenwood *et al.*, 2013).

The value of forgiveness is emphasized in biblical teachings. We are exhorted to "be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" in Ephesians 4:32. The core of the Peace Path's philosophy is this appeal for compassion, which emphasizes our shared duty to work toward peace. We

embody the biblical teaching found in Romans 12:18, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone," through our shared experiences and discussions along this path. Walking together enables us to have conversations that strengthen bonds and foster our sense of community.

The Peace Path can be used to explore forgiveness on a personal level as well as to build stronger community ties. We embody the spirit of community as we travel this path, echoing Galatians 6:2, which exhorts us to "carry each other's burdens." Walking together promotes empathy and understanding and creates a space where people feel comfortable sharing their ideas and feelings. By working together, we are able to live out the values of love and support that form the cornerstone of our faith. Our journey along the Peace Path is full of chances for development and change, much like the Israelites' journey through the wilderness to the Promised Land. Every step taken in faith is a step toward mending relationships within our community as well as toward personal healing. Matthew 5:24 emphasizes the importance and urgency of resolving disputes by telling us to seek reconciliation before offering our offerings to God.

Finally, walking the Peace Path together represents our commitment to promoting forgiveness, strengthening our bonds as a community, and expanding our spiritual horizons. As we follow the Bible's teachings, we enable our journey to mirror the deep complexity of interpersonal relationships as well as our shared capacity for healing and reconciliation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the Cognitive Theory of Forgiveness,

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there are a number of mental processes involved in forgiveness that help people get over their hurt, anger, and resentment (McCullough *et al.*, 2013). In order to comprehend forgiveness as a conscious psychological decision rather than an instinctive emotional reaction, this literature review looks at the fundamental elements of this theory (Maltby *et al.*, 2007).

Cognitive theories, people's ability to forgive is largely dependent on how they interpret their thoughts and feelings regarding the offense. In order to forgive, people must reframe their grievance, changing how they view the offender and the offense (Çolak *et al.*, 2016; Coyle, 2013). This mental adjustment can promote healing and lessen negative feelings. According to (McCullough *et al.*, 1997), people who actively practice forgiveness-related cognitive processes like empathy and perspective-taking are more likely to feel better emotionally and have better relationships with others (McCullough *et al.*, 1998).

Forgiveness

Psychology, philosophy, and theology are just a few of the fields that acknowledge the complexity of forgiveness (Kalayjian & Paloutzian, 2009). A range of interpretations can be found in its definitions, which emphasize relational, ethical, and emotional aspects (Norrie, 2018). Basic definitions and insights from both secular and biblical sources are synthesized in this review (Exline *et al.*, 2003). "A willing decision to respond to an offense with compassion and generosity rather than with resentment or revenge" is how forgiveness is defined (Freedman *et al.*, 1996). According to this definition, forgiveness is an active decision rather than a passive emotional state, emphasizing intentionality and the transition from negative feelings to constructive behaviors (Enright & values, 1996). Define forgiveness as "the development of positive feelings towards that person and the reduction of negative feelings and attitudes towards a transgressor (McCullough *et al.*, 1998). This emphasizes how important emotional change is to the process of forgiving (McCullough & Worthington, 1999). Provides a pragmatic viewpoint by characterizing forgiveness as "the gradual process of letting go of the emotional hold that an injury has on you (Luskin *et al.*, 2005). According to this definition, forgiveness is a process in which people progressively let go of their grudges and anger (Toussaint *et al.*, 2009).

Examines forgiveness from a philosophical perspective, characterizing it as "an act of surrendering the right to resentment and the will to retaliate (Lawler-Row *et al.*, 2007)." This emphasizes the moral courage needed to forgive and draws attention to the ethical aspects of forgiveness (Couenhoven, 2010). Explains that forgiving someone is "the conscious decision to release feelings of resentment or vengeance toward a person or group who has harmed you (Sells & Hargrave, 1998)." This highlights forgiveness as a moral requirement that goes beyond feelings (Fincham, 2000).

A fundamental understanding of forgiveness can be

found in the Bible. "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you," says Ephesians 4:32. This verse, which emphasizes kindness and grounds it in divine example, captures the core of forgiveness in the Christian faith. In Matthew 6:12, the Lord asks, "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." This demonstrates how forgiveness is reciprocal, supporting the idea that one's capacity to forgive others depends on their capacity to forgive themselves.

The biblical call for forgiveness is further supported by Colossians 3:13, which states, "If any of you have a grievance against someone, bear with each other and forgive one another." Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you. This verse urges believers to imitate God's forgiving character in their own relationships by tying forgiveness to divine mercy.

The concept of forgiveness has many facets and is closely related to spiritual beliefs, ethical considerations, and emotional health. Our understanding of what it means to forgive is enhanced by the interaction between biblical teachings that emphasize moral obligations and secular definitions that emphasize psychological processes. This all-encompassing perspective promotes better interpersonal relationships in addition to personal development.

Barriers to Forgiveness

Many psychological and emotional obstacles can make the process of forgiving someone extremely difficult (Raj *et al.*, 2016). Specific obstacles like self-harm, being mired in pain and resentment, fear of vulnerability, and the propensity to avoid facing pain are examined in this review (Person, 2007). These elements make the process of forgiving others more difficult in addition to impeding individual healing (Akhtar *et al.*, 2017).

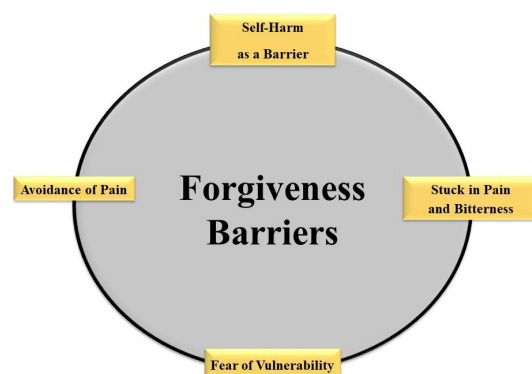


Figure 1: Conceptual framework.

obstacles that people may encounter when attempting to forgive themselves, particularly when self-harm is involved. It is necessary to comprehend these challenges in order to cultivate a path toward self-acceptance and recovery.

Self-Harm as a Barrier

Self-harm can be a coping strategy for people who have trouble forgiving others as well as an expression of emotional pain (Hirsch *et al.*, 2017). Self-harmers frequently experience a lack of control and turn to self-harm as a means of externalizing their inner turmoil (Nagra *et al.*, 2016). People may find it difficult to change their focus to forgiveness as a result of this behavior, which can prolong a painful cycle (Brown *et al.*, 2007). The persistent self-harming behaviors strengthen feelings of shame and guilt, solidifying their victim mentality and making it harder to forgive others (Evans *et al.*, 2005).

Stuck in Pain and Bitterness

One of the biggest obstacles to forgiveness is continuing to be firmly rooted in hurt and resentment. According to (McCullough, Worthington Jr, & Theology, 1994), people frequently dwell on past wrongs, letting resentment fester and intensify (McCullough, Worthington Jr, & Values, 1994; McCullough, Worthington Jr, & Theology, 1994). This obsession fosters a mindset that sees forgiveness as unnecessary in addition to impeding emotional healing. People may find it difficult to let go and move on in this state because they find a sense of identity in their complaints (Sells & Hargrave, 1998).

Fear of Vulnerability

One of the main things that prevents forgiveness is fear (Shateri *et al.*, 2016). People may worry that if they forgive someone, they will become more vulnerable or suffer more harm (Williamson *et al.*, 2014). According to Brown, B. (2007), those who have suffered severe emotional harm may find it difficult to forgive because it necessitates a certain amount of trust and vulnerability (Brown *et al.*, 2017). This fear can result in defensive mechanisms; people cling to anger and hostility as protective reactions rather than accepting the possibility of healing (Brown & Society, 2014).

Avoidance of Pain

Many people choose avoidance techniques because they are reluctant to confront the suffering brought on by their experiences (Offenbacher *et al.*, 2015). This avoidance can take the form of denial or distraction, which keeps people from admitting their emotions and the need for forgiveness (Vallejo *et al.*, 2020). As noted in Luskin, F. (2002), forgiving someone requires facing their emotional pain head-on rather than avoiding it (Basharpoor *et al.*, 2015). People are left in a vicious cycle of resentment and unresolved conflict when they don't confront this discomfort (Brenneis & Recovery, 2002).

Biblical Insights

Many of these obstacles are addressed in the Bible, which also provides guidance on how to get past them. "Up to seven times?" Peter asks Jesus in Matthew 18:21–22 how often he should pardon someone who transgresses his rules. "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven

times," Jesus responds. The difficulty of repeatedly forgiving, especially when hurt and resentment endure, is demonstrated in this passage.

"Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice," says Ephesians 4:31–32. Treat each other with kindness and compassion, and extend forgiveness to one another as God did to you in Christ. This verse emphasizes the value of letting go of grudges and the effectiveness of compassion as a means of achieving forgiveness.

Reconciliation

Cognitive Theory of Reconciliation

The cognitive theory of reconciliation places a strong emphasis on the thought processes that go into mending relationships following betrayal or conflict (Persons *et al.*, 1992). According to this method, cognitive aspects like beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions are very important in determining how people proceed through the process of reconciliation (Colley & Beech, 1988). Gaining knowledge of these mental processes can help promote recovery and rebuild relationships (Maoz, 2004).

Counseling, conflict resolution, and community interventions can all benefit from an understanding of the cognitive components of reconciliation (Rothbaum *et al.*, 2000). Techniques like cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) can help people improve their communication skills, develop empathy, and confront negative thought patterns all of which are essential for a successful reconciliation (Beck, 2011; Hofmann *et al.*, 2012).

Reconciliation

Rebuilding relationships, promoting understanding, and achieving emotional healing are all parts of the complex and multidimensional process of reconciliation (Heard *et al.*, 2017; Kyprianides & Taylor, 2024). Key definitions and viewpoints on reconciliation from a variety of fields, such as psychology, social science, and biblical teachings, are summarized in this review of the literature (Kosic *et al.*, 2009).

Secular Definitions of Reconciliation

Reconciliation is described as "a process of building and restoring relationships between individuals or groups who have experienced conflict or grievance (Brounéus, 2009; Meierhenrich & Inquiry, 2008)." This definition emphasizes the dynamic and continuous character of reconciliation, stressing the proactive steps taken to mend and rebuild relationships (Bar-Tal, 2009; Lederach, 1997). Reconciliation entails "the restoration of broken relationships and a return to a state of harmony," according to the statement (Bar-Tal, 2000; Staub & Bar-Tal, 2003). This viewpoint, which emphasizes both emotional and contextual factors, emphasizes how crucial it is to bring about peace and understanding in the wake of conflict (Rouhana & Conflict, 2004). Defines reconciliation as "a combination of the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of a more positive relationship (Burton,

2009)." In this context, reconciliation is understood to mean not only putting an end to hostilities but also fostering positive communication and collaboration (Stephan, 2008).

Theological Definitions of Reconciliation

Reconciliation is defined as "the restoration of right relationships, which necessitates forgiveness, healing, and the establishment of just social structures" in a theological context by (Comblin, 2016; Volf, 1999). In order to achieve true reconciliation, underlying injustices must be addressed, as this definition highlights both the interpersonal and systemic components of reconciliation (Volf, 2000). According to Rhoads (1992), biblical reconciliation entails "mutual acknowledgment of wrongs, forgiveness, and the commitment to restore relationships (Rhodes, 2020)." In the framework of faith, this highlights the moral and ethical aspects of reconciliation (Rhodes, 1991).

Biblical Insights on Reconciliation

The spiritual significance of reconciliation is emphasized in the Bible, which offers deep insights into it. According to 2 Corinthians 5:18–19, "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them." This chapter emphasizes both the human obligation to pursue reconciliation and the part that divine forgiveness plays in the process.

Jesus teaches about reconciliation in Matthew 5:23–24, saying, "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar." Come and offer your gift after you've made amends with them. This passage reinforces the significance of relationship reconciliation within Christian teachings by highlighting its urgency and priority.

The biblical call for reconciliation is further supported by Colossians 3:13, which states, "If any of you have a grievance against someone, bear with each other and forgive one another." Forgive as the Lord has forgiven you. This verse implies that mutual understanding and forgiveness are necessary for repairing relationships, directly linking forgiveness to the process of reconciliation.

Peace path

The idea of "Four Mile an Hour Walking" is a metaphor for living at a pace that is in line with spiritual development and community involvement, emphasizing the pursuit of peace (John 1:39) significance of "almost the tenth hour" (Knabb *et al.*, 2020; Ware III, 2014). By highlighting relationships, caregiving, and personal accountability in promoting a peaceful community, this theology review article examines how this walking pace embodies the principles of God's peace (Knabb *et al.*, 2020).

Walking in Peace

The Bible regularly uses the metaphor of walking to exhort obedient living (Stedman & Graham, 2011). "I urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," says Ephesians 4:1–3. The significance of upholding harmony via civil relationships is emphasized in this passage.

Caregiving as a Ministry

Biblical teachings on love and service are the foundation of the act of providing care (Dames, 2020). "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms," according to 1 Peter 4:10. This verse emphasizes the inherent worth of providing care as a way to spread God's peace to others (Smeets & Morice-Calkhoven, 2014).

Community Relationships

The pursuit of peace requires the development and maintenance of community ties (Provan *et al.*, 2005; Stefanski *et al.*, 2016). "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone," says Romans 12:18. This verse reaffirms that it is everyone's duty to actively promote peace in their communities.

This theology review article emphasizes how important it is to walk slowly and deliberately in our relationships and responsibilities, following Jesus' example (Elisha, 2008; Emmons, 2005). Using the metaphor of "Four Mile an Hour Walking," we can actively work to bring about peace in our communities by committing to the practice of understanding and forgiveness and drawing inspiration from biblical teachings (Milligan *et al.*, 2004). This is a conceptual analysis of the relationships between the Peace Path, forgiveness, and reconciliation in the context of "Four Mile an Hour Walking." (Macauley, 2000). We might be better able to comprehend how forgiveness leads to reconciliation and how reconciliation fosters a Peace Path if we can visualize these elements in a relationship diagram (Strabbing, 2020). The "Four Mile an Hour Walking" philosophy, which encourages people to walk intentionally and mindfully toward peace and the well-being of their communities, is best exemplified by this interdependence (Tint, 2009).

Community Ties

Community ties are strengthened through the essential processes of forgiveness and reconciliation, which promote mutual understanding and social cohesion (Kalayjian & Paloutzian, 2009). Drawing from both secular literature and biblical teachings, this statement examines the importance of these ideas in creating resilient communities (Green, 2009).

For communities to be harmonious, forgiveness is essential (Warmke, 2016). Forgiveness can strengthen

bonds between community members by promoting emotional healing and lowering animosity (O'Connell, 1995). This emotional release enables people to put their complaints behind them, creating a cooperative and encouraging atmosphere (Oliver, 2004). In larger social contexts, communities that place a high value on forgiveness tend to be more conflict-resistant (Gilad *et al.*, 2021). Forgiveness and reconciliation are critical to a community's long-term stability because they enable it to bounce back from conflict and preserve social cohesion (Legaree *et al.*, 2007; Massey, 2009).

Reconciliation as a Community Building Process

Through proactive relationship restoration and resolving underlying issues, reconciliation expands on the idea of forgiveness (Wessells, 2009). Reconciliation, according to Fisher, R. J. (2000), entails fostering communication and reestablishing trust between people or groups, both of which are critical to maintaining community cohesiveness (Lerche & Jeong, 2002). Reconciliation allows people in the community to have productive conversations, which promotes mutual understanding and cooperation (Tint *et al.*, 2014).

Reconciliation and forgiveness are essential to building solid community ties (Kalayjian & Paloutzian, 2009). These processes improve interpersonal relationships and support community stability and resilience by fostering healing and understanding (Green, 2009; Massey, 2009). The transformative power of forgiveness and reconciliation is emphasized in both secular research and biblical teachings, highlighting these practices as crucial for creating harmonious and cohesive societies (Figure 2).

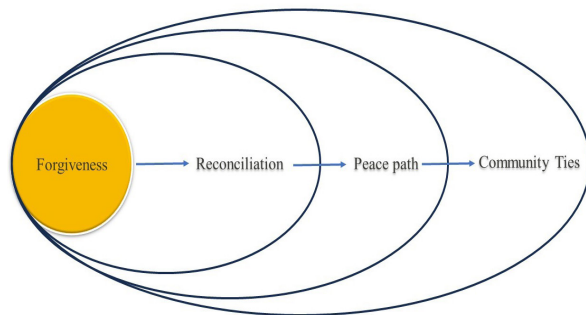


Figure 2: An important route that fortifies community ties is the path from forgiveness to reconciliation and, eventually, to peace. In addition to resolving personal complaints, this procedure promotes community stability and healing. Fostering social harmony requires an understanding of its efficacy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The approach described in this review article, "Four Mile an Hour Walking on Peace Path: Theology Review Article," will explicitly address the themes of God's peace, caring for others, community relationships, and the role that each individual can play in promoting peace. The methodical approach to clearly expressing the methods

employed in this analysis is provided below.

Materials

In creating "Four Mile an Hour Walking on Peace Path of Forgiveness and Reconciliation," a number of essential tools and materials have been used to enable a thorough examination of the biblical themes and their applicability to current peacebuilding initiatives. Genesis 4:1–15: This chapter sheds light on the dynamics of accountability and caregiver relationships while highlighting the consequences of our decisions and actions. Leviticus 19:33–34: This passage highlights the value of neighborly love and the necessity of acceptance and unity within the community. Matthew 26:47–54: This lesson promotes peace over conflict and encourages contemplation of humility and the transformative power of peace. Matthew 5:43–48: This passage exhorts people to live as examples of forgiveness and love, making a personal commitment to harmonious relationships.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

An examination of "walking four miles an hour" as a metaphor for the process of reconciliation and forgiveness offers important insights into both its theological and practical significance. This review highlights important findings that show how this metaphor captures the deliberate, timed process necessary for healing and societal restoration. The idea of "walking four miles an hour" perfectly captures the thoughtful and intentional character of the processes of reconciliation and forgiveness. The results of this theological review demonstrate that this path entails intentionality, involvement in the community, and the fusion of emotional and spiritual healing. This strategy can help people build stronger bonds with one another, advance social harmony, and eventually bring about enduring peace.

Discussion

We can analyze the complex processes of forgiveness and reconciliation by using the insightful lens of "walking four miles an hour" (Freedman & Values, 1998). The methodical, careful work needed to traverse these intricate emotional and spiritual journeys is reflected in the pacing (Mahoney & Pargament, 2004). The analysis of this metaphor clarifies the nature of the journey as well as its wider ramifications for faith and community (Goodall & Berman, 1999; Sharpley & Jepson, 2011). Walking slowly is a metaphor for the intentionality of reconciliation and forgiveness (Green, 2009; Lederach & Lederach, 2011). Defined forgiveness as a multi-step process that includes admitting wrongdoing, processing feelings, and finally choosing to forgive (Auerbach, 2009; Nussbaum, 2016). Moving four miles per hour highlights the fact that this is a marathon, not a sprint, and that it calls for perseverance and introspection (Lederach & Lederach, 2011). People can face their emotions and develop a greater comprehension of the complexities involved by taking this kind of mindful pace.

Furthermore, Christian communities find great resonance in the act of walking together. Biblical allusions like Matthew 18:20, which states, "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them," highlight the communal nature of forgiveness and reconciliation. This verse emphasizes the value of shared experiences in the healing process and shows that pursuing reconciliation as a group is more successful (Klar & Branscombe, 2016). Emotional healing requires accountability, support, and a sense of belonging, all of which can be fostered by walking in the community (Elkins, 2016; Propst, 1988). It is also important to discuss this metaphor's theological foundations (Harkaway-Krieger, 2024). As stated by Volf (1996), reconciliation necessitates a change in identity and community in addition to the restoration of relationships. Living out spiritual qualities like grace and compassion, which are essential to the Christian faith, is part of walking together on the path of forgiveness. This journey is consistent with Galatians 5:22–23, which describes the fruits of the Spirit that arise when people make a commitment to patience, love, and peace.

Walking can also represent a way to process emotions. People can face their emotions without feeling rushed thanks to the steady tempo. Processing feelings during the forgiveness process is essential, according to McCullough and Worthington (1994). The metaphor highlights how slowing down promotes healing and keeps unresolved issues from undermining efforts at reconciliation by allowing for deeper emotional engagement.

CONCLUSION

"Walking four miles an hour" is a moving metaphor for the deliberate and intentional process of forgiving and reuniting (Sell & Cognition, 2016). This investigation demonstrates that both procedures necessitate deliberateness, introspection, and community involvement, promoting closer ties between people (Ferch & Development, 1998). Biblical wisdom, which emphasizes the transformational power of forgiveness in our lives and communities, can serve as a guide for us as we travel this path (Smallen, 2019). Intentional Journey: Walking at a steady pace requires deliberate thought, which emphasizes that forgiveness is a process that takes time to complete. Reminding us to "forget what is behind and strain toward what is ahead," Philippians 3:13–14 exhorts people to concentrate on their path to recovery and peacemaking. Community Involvement: Walking together serves as an example of how crucial group support is to the process of reconciliation. According to Ecclesiastes 4:9–10, "Two are better than one... If either of them falls down, one can help the other up." This verse emphasizes how important it is to work together and support one another in the quest for peace. Spiritual Development: Spiritual teachings have a strong foundation in the act of forgiveness. We are urged to "be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" in Ephesians 4:32. This emphasizes how important it is to model divine compassion in our

interpersonal interactions, strengthening the link between spiritual development and forgiveness.

Emotional Healing: People who walk steadily are able to process their feelings and face their pain instead of avoiding it. According to Psalm 34:18, "The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit," admitting our hurts results in divine healing.

We accept the difficulties and rewards that come with traveling four miles per hour along the peaceful path of reconciliation and forgiveness (Massey, 2009). Through this introspective process, we develop inner serenity and fortify community bonds (McElroy *et al.*, 2023). The application of biblically based forgiveness and reconciliation promotes transformative healing and unity in a world that is frequently characterized by conflict (Taysi & Orcan, 2017). Let us work together to establish compassionate and understanding environments that mirror Christ's example of grace and love (Salifu Yendork *et al.*, 2022).

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