

Forgiveness Case Study 1

Married for 12 years with two young sons, Bryan finds himself in the middle of a difficult divorce. His wife, Sara, is angry and bitter about the demise of the relationship. Her view is that Bryan failed to meet her emotional needs and put his career above the family. Sara’s bitterness spills over into her relationship with her children and she continually portrays Bryan to them in a negative light. As a result, the children act out their anger toward Bryan when in his presence and they are resistant to continuing the agreed visitation with him. One child told him on the last visit that he “hated” Bryan and wished he would “just go away.” He believes that Sara is sabotaging his relationship with the children purposely in retaliation for what she perceives are Bryan’s failures in the marriage.

Bryan is very upset over his wife’s behavior but does not want his feelings of anger and frustration to affect how he acts around the children. He has a strong faith and wants to respond in a Christ-like fashion.

1. Who is the primary offender? What are the offenses?

2. Who is the secondary offender? What are the offenses?

3. What feelings Bryan might be experiencing?

4. How should Bryan respond to the children and his wife as he works toward forgiveness?

5. What important elements would be appropriate in his forgiveness plan?

6. How might Bryan's faith play a part in his plan?
