



Spirituality of the 12 Steps

Step 8 **Payback Time**

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON

RICHARD ROHR'S

BREATHING UNDERWATER

Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

— **Step 8 of the Twelve Steps**

“Nathan said to David, ‘You are the man!’ . . . And David said to Nathan, ‘I have indeed sinned.’”

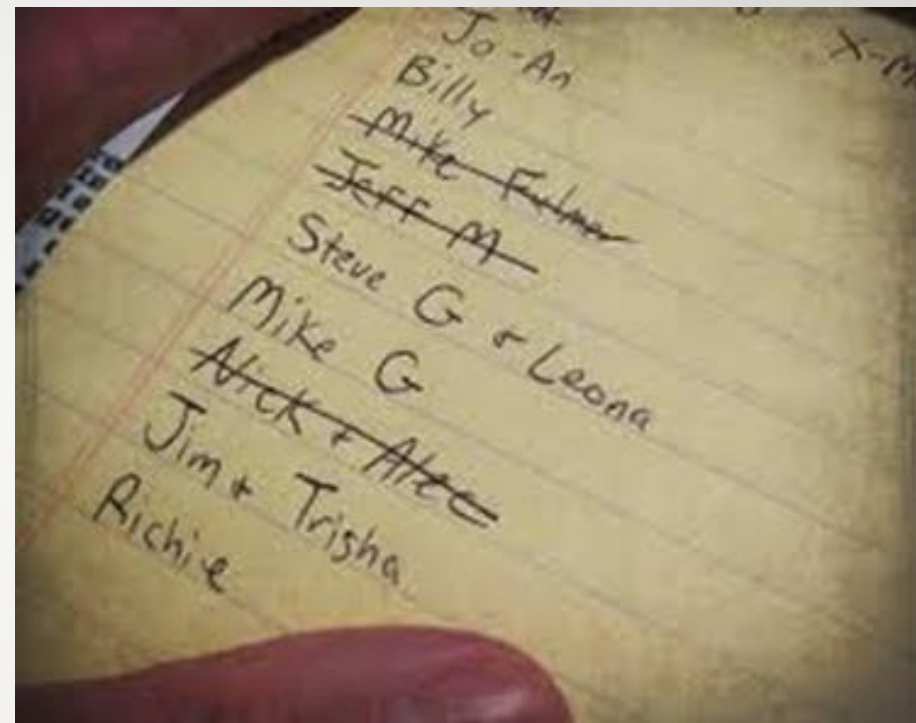
— **2 Samuel 12:7, 13**

“In judging others you condemn yourself, since you behave no differently than those you judge.” —

Romans 2:1

“If you are bringing your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother or sister has anything against you, go first and be reconciled to him or her, and then come back and present your gift.” —

Matthew 5:23–24





lower economy of merit or “satisfaction.”
higher economy of grace and mercy
build on one another

great tasks of life—love, forgiveness, unjust suffering, and death itself.

The universal principle is called “transcend and include.”

We usually need to make amends to forgive even ourselves.

“We are only the earthenware jars that hold this treasure, to make it clear that such overwhelming [healing] power comes from God and not from us”

Our family, friends, and enemies need a clear accounting to be free and go ahead with their lives *Neither side needs to accuse or defend, but just state the facts as we remember them, and be open to hear what the other needed, heard, or felt.*



“Make a list,” it says, and that list is of “all those we have harmed.”
Note that it does not say those who have harmed us...

“You are damn selfish!” Or, “Until you get beyond your massive narcissism you are never going to grow up.”

Jesus: who told us “renounce ourselves”

The Geometry of the Cross

We are the religion of
“incarnation”

(enfleshment or embodiment)
not spiritualization.



“became willing to make amends to them all”

At any rate, we all need to do some clean-up work inside.



“I accept your forgiveness, but why is it that I do not feel forgiven?”

We were both still “held bound” by his attempt to free himself without also freeing me.

Jesus gave us all the wonderful power to both lock and unlock reality.

Instead of making lists of who hurt me, I now make lists of people I have perhaps hurt, failed, or mistreated, and then do something about it.

God will show you the best way, the best place, the best time, and the best words.



Making such a list will change your foundational consciousness from one of feeding resentments to a mind that is both grateful and humble—all the time.

Questions for Reflection

How do you feel about making a list of people you have harmed?

Do you really believe that you can bind and unbind others?