



Forgive

?

WHEN HAS
IT COST YOU
A LOT TO FIX
SOMETHING?

The POINT >

Relationships grow deeper with forgiveness.

> MATTHEW 18:21-28,32-33

²¹Then Peter approached him and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? As many as seven times?”

²²“I tell you, not as many as seven,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven.

²³“For this reason, the kingdom of heaven can be compared to a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴When he began to settle accounts, one who owed ten thousand talents was brought before him.

²⁵Since he did not have the money to pay it back, his master commanded that he, his wife, his children, and everything he had be sold to pay the debt.

²⁶“At this, the servant fell facedown before him and said, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you everything’

²⁷Then the master of that servant had compassion, released him, and forgave him the loan.

²⁸“That servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him, started choking him, and said, ‘Pay what you owe!’

.....
³²Then, after he had summoned him, his master said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. ³³Shouldn’t you also have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

The worst product to buy generic is trash bags.¹ You may save a few dollars, but there's a high price to pay in a smelly kitchen and a ripped bag.



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // FAMILY

When families experience brokenness, such as conflict, abuse, or divorce, God desires to bring healing and unity and to use the broader family of God to minister to hurting families during difficult times.

Sometimes we're better off paying a higher price. Have your parents ever bought the generic brand of cereal to save a few pennies, and you found the texture and taste was much closer to cardboard than corn flakes?

A lot of things come at a high price, but often times they're worth it. Forgiveness is one of those things. It can be very costly, but the price of forgiveness is a great investment in any relationship. In order for our friendships, families, and churches to be healthy, forgiveness is absolutely necessary. After all, they're all made up of people, and people are imperfect. Therefore, we're going to do things that bother, offend, and injure one another. Without forgiveness, we'd all be alone, but God has designed us to live in relationships with others. And relationships grow when we let go of a hurt or a critical remark.

As we examine Jesus' story of the unforgiving servant, let's ask God to reveal any areas where we may be holding onto resentment and unforgiveness. When we forgive others, God forgives us.

MATTHEW 18:21-22

1 What can happen when you forgive someone?

2 Should we require an apology before we extend forgiveness?

*Our debt of rebellion
against God is so huge that
it's even more outrageous
than ten thousand talents.
#BSFLRelationships*



MATTHEW 18:28,32-33

6 How do the king's actions in this parable mirror God's actions toward us?

MATTHEW 18:23-27

3 What keeps us from offering forgiveness to someone who has hurt us?

4 How are grace and mercy connected to forgiveness?

5 How would you describe grace to someone new to Christianity?

7 When have you seen forgiveness deepen or restore a relationship? Explain.

8 How does forgiving bring glory to God?





LIVE IT OUT



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // FAMILY

When families experience brokenness, such as conflict, abuse, or divorce, God desires to bring healing and unity and to use the broader family of God to minister to hurting families during difficult times.

When we are hurt by others, even our families, many times our natural response is anger or bitterness. However, when we live with the weight of these, it hurts everyone involved. Reconciliation and restoration involve our being willing to let go of the hurts we've experienced in order to bring healing. This benefits both the person who has hurt us, as well as ourselves. Ultimately, it reflects the character of God (who extended forgiveness to us even though we've offended Him) and brings glory to Him.

> CHRIST

When we came to faith in Christ, He forgave us of all our sins. However, we still fall short of God's standards every day, and though we're forgiven, we're called to confess our specific sins in pursuing "relational forgiveness" to stay close to God.

9 What sins have you committed that you've yet to confess? Confess those to God, repent (which means to change), and begin pursuing God in those areas.

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY
& WORLD

> COMMUNITY

When others sin against us, if it disrupts the relationship, we're called to go to them to pursue unity. On the other hand, if we know that we've offended someone, we're to go to them and ask for forgiveness.

10 Who has offended you in a way that has damaged the relationship? This week, go to them with kindness, patience, and grace, and let them know you're willing to forgive them. *(It may be good to talk this through with a leader. If the person isn't willing to accept responsibility for the offense, it could be difficult to work through.)*



11 Who have you offended? Go to them and let them know you're sorry, promise not to do it again, and ask for their forgiveness, so the relationship can be restored.

> CULTURE

For the Christian, we understand how important forgiveness is. However, many in our culture today, though they have an idea about forgiveness, have never experienced it in real ways.

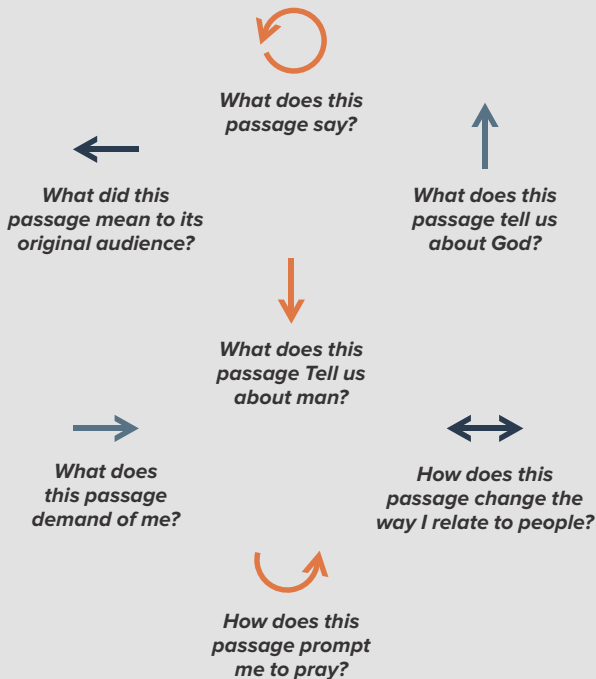
12 Who do you know that struggles with anger or bitterness because of offenses they've suffered, or they're callous and insensitive and have no problem continually offending others?

13 This week, share with them about the ways you've personally offended Christ and of His forgiveness given to you. Help your friends understand how forgiveness could impact their lives.

DAILY DEVOTIONS



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day One EPHESIANS 4:25

Lying refers specifically to making false statements with the intent to deceive. More generally, however, it refers to any words or actions that contradict the truth. God is faithful and true, and as His children we are called to reflect these aspects of His character. Loving God and loving others well requires that we are honest, and that we work to make the truth known. However, when we deceive, we hurt one another in real ways. This should never happen, but because of the nature of the church—specifically that we are called to a special kind of love and unity—there should be no hint of deceit among God’s people. But the truth is that, even in the church, people don’t always speak honestly. Hopefully we don’t intentionally deceive or manipulate (though some do), but some may be characterized by any of these: exaggerating, cheating, making promises we don’t keep, making false excuses, sharing private information, and more. Anything that doesn’t reflect the truth is wrong, so we should always be careful to say what’s true.

➤ **How are you tempted to share mistruths?**

➤ **Why is it so important to be honest?**

Day Two

EPHESIANS 4:26-27



James teaches us that the anger of man never accomplishes the righteousness of God (1:20). However, here we read that we are to be angry, yet in a way that isn't sinful. Here's what this means. We read in Scripture that Jesus became angry. In Mark 3:1-6, Jesus was angry that the religious leaders were so hard-hearted that they cared more about keeping the law than healing the crippled man. Also, when Jesus entered the temple and saw people selling to make money instead of worshiping, He was very angry (Mark 11:15). Jesus' anger was never for selfish reasons, but because of the mistreatment of others and dishonor toward God. Our anger, however, tends to be selfish. It's possible to be angry like Jesus, but selfish anger always tempts us toward sin.

- **When you become angry, is it for righteous reasons or selfish reasons?**
- **How can you deal with anger in a healthy way?**

Day Three

EPHESIANS 4:28

Before we became Christians, we were sinners and our lives were characterized by sin. But coming to Christ involves faith and repentance—trusting Him and turning from our sins. However, just because we're saved doesn't mean our lives are automatically going to be perfect. Apparently, in the Ephesian church, there were people who continued to struggle with lying and anger (as mentioned in the previous verses), as well as stealing. Paul reminded the church not to steal. God had shared this standard very clearly in the Ten Commandments, and stealing—illegally taking what I want at the expense of someone else—is an outright offense against God's standards for His people. Instead, we are to work hard to put ourselves in the position to share with others. This reflects the generous heart of God.

- **Why is it necessary to repent of sins to follow Jesus?**
- **Why is stealing such a serious offense? Why are we called to be generous?**

Day Four

EPHESIANS 4:29-30

Our words are very powerful. Just like one spark can be the cause of an entire forest's burning down, and just like a small harness is used to control a 1500 pound horse, our words have great power. When we're careless with the things we say, we can hurt the people we care about very seriously. This should never be characteristic of the people of God. Instead, we should be known to use the power of our words for good—to build others up. This may be in the form of sharing the gospel with a lost person or teaching a Bible study with our friends. We may use our words to pray over a friend who's going through a difficult time, or we may simply say “great job” to a friend who has worked hard on her art project. Whatever the case, we need to refuse being careless and hurtful with our words. Instead, we should be kind, using our speech to help others know the love of God and grow in their faith.

➤ **When has someone hurt you with their words? How did it affect you?**

➤ **What specific ways can you use your words to build others up?**

Day Five

EPHESIANS 4:31-32



The church is the body of Jesus on this earth (1 Cor. 12:27), and we are to live like Him in every way. However, as long as we're in this life, we're going to struggle with the old sin nature. We're going to offend the people in our lives, and others are going to offend us. People, even Christians, will sometimes lie and be angry in unhealthy ways. They'll steal and use their words to hurt us, and so much more. All these are wrong! However, it's up to us to respond the right way, because if we respond poorly, we're just as wrong. Let's keep this in mind—we've offended Jesus in the worst kinds of ways, yet He's forgiven us. In light of this, we are called to refuse bitterness and anger toward those who hurt us. Instead, just like God's forgiven us, we're to forgive others.

➤ **When have you struggled to forgive someone who hurt you?**

➤ **Why is it so important that we are willing to forgive?**