

# THE POWER TO FORGIVE

*"Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you" (Colossians 3:13).*



Forgiveness is one of the most powerful responses that we could ever have, yet the steps in forgiving others may be difficult. Forgiving others is very hard. The love of Christ is the only way we can set free those who have deeply wounded us. The love of Christ gives us the only context we have for believing God has forgiven us.

There is perhaps no greater gift you can offer God than a heart that knows the power of forgiveness and decides to set others free. Forgiving is the ability to treat one as if the offense never occurred. Forgiving shows that the love, grace, and mercy of Jesus are operating in our lives. It is time to access this life-changing grace of forgiveness.

Is there someone who has offended you? Are you able to release the person in forgiveness? God gives us divine power to forgive. We who have received the freedom of forgiveness have the power to set one another free. This is a power that truly sets the captive free and can affect the whole world. Forgiveness defeats darkness on a massive scale because it involves the resurrection power of Jesus. Nothing can defeat the greatness and glory there is in *one act of forgiveness*.

Here are some basic steps toward extending and receiving forgiveness:

- **Recognize and call sin what God calls it** - Be specific and thorough. Remember that forgiveness is not excusing and approving of inappropriate behavior or saying that an offense isn't important. Be honest with yourself and recognize your emotional response. You may feel angry, sad, let down, or disappointed. It isn't wrong to have emotions. They are natural. It's what you do with your emotions that can be sinful. Make sure there is no offensive way in you.

***"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23-24).***

- **Share with God honestly and let Him heal you** - Tell God what happened to you and how you feel. Look at His evaluation of the situation. Focus on Him and His faithfulness. Spend time with Him, and let Him restore where sin has destroyed. Forgiveness releases God's

divine healing power.

***“O lord my God, I called to you for help and you healed me” (Psalm 30:2).***

- **Set the offender free, understanding that it is a process** - Declare forgiveness. Say, *“I forgive [name the individual or group] for [name the offense].”* Don't say, *“I want to forgive.”* It takes time to go through the process of forgiveness. The hurt can come up at different times, and we must choose to forgive again. It doesn't mean we automatically forget the offense.

***“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32).***

- **Release the offender to God** - Repent of your desire to punish or take revenge. Let God deal with the offense. Focus on today rather than the past. Let the offender off the hook. Declare God as judge over the person and the situation.

***“Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the lord” (Romans 12:19).***

- **Bless the offender** - Apply God's forgiveness. Trust and reconcile when possible, but realize that forgiveness does not always mean we have to relate to the person in the future. In some cases, this is not possible. Know God's protection and justice. We are God's called-out people, who know who we are in Christ and walk in love with God and one another. We become partakers of His resurrected life. Forgiveness is essential if we want to walk in personal and corporate revival.

***“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse” (Romans 12:14).***

**God will give us the grace to fully set everyone free.** May we be like Jesus, who was the first one to love. When God forgives us, He gives us the power to forgive. May the river of God's life flow through us in that we bless everyone we meet. May we remind people of how much they are loved by God. As we give our lives away in love and forgiveness, we become free ourselves. Many of us don't realize the power there is in truly forgiving one another. It is much greater and has a far greater consequence than any of us have ever realized.

*Dear Lord, I thank You for the power of forgiveness, and I choose to forgive everyone who has hurt me. Help me set [name anyone who has offended you] free and release them to You. Help me not to take on another's issues and bless those who have hurt me. Help me walk in righteousness, peace, and joy, demonstrating Your life here on earth. I choose to be kind and compassionate, forgiving others, just as You forgave me. In Jesus' name, Amen.*