

# “Faith That Forgives”

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**Scripture:** Psalm 32:1 NASB says, “How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!”

**Question:** Is there anyone who has hurt you that you need to forgive? Is there anyone from your past who can say you have wronged them and never made it right?

**Introduction:** Church a happy person is someone who has been forgiven because being forgiven can bring joy and set us free. On the other hand there is a joy that can open the door for us to experience freedom after forgiving someone else who has deeply hurt us.

- Church what we must understand is, there are side affects to **unforgiveness**. What are some of them?
- **Bitterness** can hold any good Christian down.
- **Guilt** can turn the mightiest child of God into a coward.
- Both of these spiritual burdens result from failing to respond wisely to **failure**. **Bitterness** is from **not forgiving** those who have wronged us. **Guilt** is from **sinning against** God and others without making any attempt to make it right with either. We cannot be **faithful Kingdom servants** who walk closely with God unless we forgive and **release the baggage** from our **past**, including both **bitterness** and **guilt**. If we don't release past baggage we will be like a runner, running a marathon with **bricks in our pocket** or driving our car with **the parking brake on**. Understand bitterness and guilt add unnecessary **weight** and **waste** our time and energy. If we are going to be **Kingdom servants** we must take **responsibility** and let go of **yesterday**. Realize it's hard to have **a vision** for what's ahead when you're constantly **haunted** by what's in your **rearview mirror**. We must let go of the past!
- **Kingdom servants** are **passionate** about **reconciliation** and are in the business of bringing **good fruit** out of **rotten situations**. We **fail** - He **restores!** / We **confess** - He **forgives!** This is the story of the Bible!

**Transition:** There are 5 things I want us to look at tonight that will help us with faith to forgive.

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## I. Decide To \_\_\_\_\_ Your Past

- What is **reconciliation**? To **reconcile** something is to make it **compatible** with **something else**; it is the process of **bringing harmony** between two or more things. Theologically speaking, **reconciliation** is the process by which God made sinful man

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compatible with Himself. It is through our **repentance** and our **faith** in Christ we have been **reconciled** to God and fully forgiven of our sins. **Read Rom.5:1**

- As Christians we too often **sin, hurt others**, and leave a trail of **wounded lives** behind us. However, **God is calling us to make things right** and **demonstrate a spirit of reconciliation**. But not only have we **hurt others** but we have also **failed to forgive others** who have **hurt us**.
- The question is how do we **reconcile** with others? **First** and foremost it begins with **humbling ourselves, repenting and apologizing** when we have **stumbled**. Understand an **apology** does not demonstrate **weakness** but incredible **maturity** and **strength**. We must **never let pride get in the way of doing the right thing**. As **Kingdom servants** we are **called** to be **reconcilers**.

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## II. Decide To \_\_\_\_\_ Everyday

1. In order for **reconciliation** to take place we must **embrace the power of forgiveness**.
  - Is there anyone who has wronged you in the past that you have not fully forgiven? Understand when we **don't forgive**, we throw other people into a **debtor's prison inside our hearts** and **hold them hostage**. **Strong relationships** and **marriages** don't happen because people never hurt each other. They happen because the people involved **keep on forgiving**. **Forgiveness is the escape route** for getting out of our own prison of bitterness and through the **door to restored broken relationships with others**. We must **never stop forgiving!** **Mk 11:25 / Matt. 6:12**
- **Lam. 3:23** reveals **God's mercies** are **new every morning** and so should ours. We therefore must deal with life's issues quickly, keep short accounts, and then move on, if not, **a bitter root will spring up and continue to grow**. Is there someone **you need to forgive**?

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## III. Decide Not To Allow the Fruit of \_\_\_\_\_ to Reign in Your Life

- **Bitter fruit** comes from a **bitter root**! Three things that **bitterness** is able to produce in our lives based on **Eph. 4:26 - 31**.

1. **It gives opportunities for the devil.** – **Eph. 4:26 - 27**
2. **It can cause us to engage in unwholesome speech** – **Eph. 4:29**
3. **It will grieve the Holy Spirit** - **Eph. 4:30**

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- Prov. 17:22 NLT says, “A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person’s strength.”
- If we are going to obey God and be **Kingdom servants we must forgive**. If we want to **keep the poison of bitterness out of our lives, we must forgive!** If we want our **marriages, ministries, families, and churches to have strong relationships and grow, we must forgive.**
- Also, we must **teach our children to forgive**, or they won’t forgive us when we fail. If we want to help others **walk in unity and love**, we must **set the example first ourselves.**

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## IV. Decide To Forgive Those Who Have \_\_\_\_\_

1. **First of all we should decide to forgive those who have wronged us because God alone is ultimately the judge over a person’s sinful actions and not us.** More important, **He alone knows the perfect judgment for that person, and He is the only One qualified to carry it out.**
- A bitter heart sometimes doesn’t see it that way. We think if I forgive, some say, it means that what they did to me was all right. If I forgive, they’ll be getting away with the wrongs they’ve done to me. **Not true!** The very fact that their offense requires your forgiveness indicates that what they did was wrong. That’s the whole point. **Forgiveness is pardoning a legitimate debt that is owed.** Your forgiveness will release you from the burden, weight, and pain of having to worry about holding them accountable yourself for their sins. That’s God’s job. And by forgiving, you get to heal and move on.
2. **Nobody says forgiving is easy. It’s not!** Getting someone to forgive another person is one of the most difficult challenges of all. The **deeper the hurt, the more God will give you grace to help you handle it.**
3. **I don’t need to forgive because it happened too long ago and I’ve moved on.** Then why do the angry emotions come back when you think about or remember the situation? **If you haven’t consciously forgiven**, you may have just **mowed over the weeds without pulling up the roots of bitterness.**
4. **That person doesn’t deserve my forgiveness! You’re right!** No one does. **Forgiveness is a gift.** Remember God **forgave you** when you **didn’t earn it or deserve it.**

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## 5. I just can't do it. I'm not able to forgive. Again you're right!

- You can't do it without God's help. **Read Phil. 4:13, Phil. 2:13**
- Don't look for reasons why you **shouldn't forgive**, look for reasons **why you should**.

## 6. Forgiveness doesn't mean, not confronting others about what they've done.

- You may need to **wisely set up some boundaries** and **accountability** to keep this person from doing the same thing again both **for their good** and **for yours**. But regardless, **you need to completely forgive on your end**.

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## V. Decide To Reconcile With Those

1. The second part of forgiveness is reconciling with those we have wronged.
2. When we mistreat others or mishandle relationships, we are causing people to go through the same pain and heartache we've been through. **Read Matt. 6:23 – 24**
3. Regardless of how one receives your apology, you are still responsible to humbly apologize for anything you have done wrong. **Read Rom. 12:18**

- You will never reconcile with your past by sweeping your own mistakes under the rug, you must take full responsibility for them. **Read Luke 19:8** We need to make things right with those we have wronged, **financially, morally, emotionally, and spiritually**, by **paying debts, making restitution, humbling ourselves** and **confessing our sin**. **Read Acts 24:16 NASB, 1 Tim.1: 19**
- The consequences of admitting failure and apologizing only last for a few minutes, but the benefits are lifelong and **result in unending freedom, joy, peace, and integrity**.

### Conclusion:

**Rom. 12:17 – 18 says, “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.”**

- Is there anyone who has hurt you that you need to forgive today? Then do it!
- Is there anyone from your past you have wronged them and never made it right? If so, start asking God to prepare the way and prepare their hearts for you to make things right.
- **Church we must forgive, release, apologize, and repent.**
- **To forgive is to set a prisoner free... and discover that the prisoner was you.** We don't lose anything when we forgive. We gain back our lives.