

FORGIVE



The act of forgiving is not always easy. There are some things that happen to us that are so horrible, we build a wall to protect ourselves. God warns us, "*Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.*" Eph 4:26-27

Are you holding back forgiveness?

As humans, we have a natural tendency to require repayment for wrongs done to us. We demand an apology. We demand recompense. We demand the inflictor of our pain to beg our forgiveness and serve our every whim, until we feel they have been punished enough to finally be forgiven.

After being beaten, whipped, skin torn, bleeding from a thorny crown forced into his skull, spat upon, forced to carry the heavy load of a cross, humiliated by his nakedness, arms spread wide, wrists and feet driven through with spikes, in excruciating pain, jerked as the cross settled into its upright position, mocked, scorned, jeered at, abandoned and left to die, Jesus said, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" Luke 23:34



God, our Father, is in the business of mending broken hearts.



What has happened to you that can compare to the suffering of Jesus? *"God made him who had no sin, to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God". 2 Cor 5:21* Our sufferings and the wrongs committed against us, pale in comparison.

Are you holding back forgiveness?

Holding on to the wrongs done against you is like trying to swim the ocean while dragging along your luggage. Unforgiveness is that luggage. The only way to survive is to **let it go**. Sometimes that may require forgiving someone over and over again.

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, *"How many times should I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?"* Jesus answered, *"I tell you, not seven times, but **seventy-seven times.**"* Matt 18:21-22

"If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent', forgive him." Luke 17:3-4



No greater love has no one than this: That he lay down His life for His friends. John 15:21

"When you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that the Father in heaven may forgive your sins. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your sins." Mark 11:25-26

Who do you still need to forgive???

read

*The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant
Matthew 18:21-35*

Have you heard the story about the woman angry with her sister over copying their Mother's secret recipe, and giving it away? She refused to speak to her sister for years. At their family reunion many years later, the woman finally decided to forgive her sister. She walked up to her and said, "I want you to know that I forgive you." Confused, her sister responded, "What for?" She said, "For giving away Mom's secret recipe." Her sister replied, "I never ever knew you were angry with me!"

The woman had spent many years harboring her anger toward her sister, while her sister continued to live her life in peace. The only person hurt by the unforgiveness, was the person harboring it.

When you pray, ask God to reveal to you any unforgiveness you may be harboring. When someone is revealed to you, ask the LORD to help you forgive them. Every time you think something negative about that person, forgive them again and again and again, until you only have good thoughts for them.

