

## 8. How Can We Forgive?

Forgiveness can sometimes be a very difficult thing. Sometimes we struggle and try to forgive, but it just seems impossible. We need God's help. That's the key to forgiveness – Let God help you.

The definition in my iPhone app WordNet3.0 of the verb "forgive" is – 1) to cease to feel resentment against, on account of wrong committed; 2) to give up claim to requital from or retribution upon an offender; 3) to absolve; 4) to pardon.

Let's look at what scripture from the Holy Bible says about forgiveness (**Scriptures 1. What the Bible Says About Forgiveness**).

Jesus said in the book of Matthew that if we do not forgive others their sins, then our Father in Heaven will not forgive us our sins. Even if the sins against us are relentless and continual. Yikes.

There are some things we can do that can help us to forgive.

- Putting the past behind us and focusing on today and moving forward to the future helps. When we dwell on the past hurts, we can get stuck and not be able to move forward (**Scriptures 2. Put the Past Behind Us and Move Forward**).

The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians that forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, presses on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Even before Jesus was born, the Prophet Isaiah prophesied the Lord said to forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. That the Lord is doing a new thing!

- Concentrating on God's will and on spiritual things, not our own Earthly desires and needs can help bring us to forgiveness also (**Scriptures 3. God's Will, Not Ours**).

Fixing our eyes on Jesus allows Jesus to lead us and makes our faith complete. When we set our minds on things above (not on Earthly things), the Earthly problems can fade.

- Last but certainly not least is praying for our enemies. When we pray for our enemies (for good things to our enemies), we give the Holy Spirit a chance to touch our hearts about those enemies. Sometimes God reveals to us how He (God) feels for that enemy. God can give us a different perspective about that person which can allow us to be able to understand more and to forgive (**Scriptures 4. Pray for Our Enemies**).

Jesus made it very clear in the book of Matthew and Luke that we should love and pray for our enemies and do good to those who mistreat us. Let the Lord lead you on what you should do.

Praying and reading God's word is key. Remember you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you, including forgiving. Forgiveness helps us more than it helps the ones we are forgiving. Holding anger and resentment in is seriously unhealthy. Jesus wants what is best for us. He doesn't want us to damage our well-being.

Just because you still feel hurt about what someone did, doesn't necessarily mean you have not forgiven them. There will be triggers that remind you of your pain. Feeling hurt doesn't always mean you still have resentment to that person. Forgiveness also does not mean that we have to allow the abuse (or hurtful acts) to continue. We need to set boundaries.

The Lord has led me to cut certain people out of my everyday life, and also has led me to just love others.

The worst thing you can do is decide on your own how to handle the situation. Let the Lord help you and lead you. You may be truly surprised how the omnipotent Lord leads you.

## jenaministries – Part 2 8. How Can We Forgive?

### Scripture 1. What The Bible Says About Forgiveness

**Matthew 6:14-15** For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

**Matthew 18:21-35** Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

"Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. "At this the servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.' "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.

When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened. "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

"This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

### Scriptures 2. Put the Past Behind Us and Move Forward

**Philippians 3:13-14** Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

**Isaiah 43:18-19** "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

### Scriptures 3. God's Will, Not Ours

**Hebrews 12:2** fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

**Colossians 3:2** Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

### Scriptures 4. Pray for Our Enemies

**Matthew 5:43-44** (Jesus said) "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

**Luke 6:27-29** (Jesus said) "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."