



Bible Class

Wednesday, May 16, 2018



Discussion Session #1:

- God's Math
- Definition for FORGIVENESS
- The Gift of Forgiveness
- What Does God Say About Forgiveness

for·give·ness -fər'givnəs/ *noun*

noun: **forgiveness**; plural noun: **forgivenesses**

1. the action or process of forgiving or being forgiven.

"she is quick to ask forgiveness when she has overstepped the line"

[pardon](#), [absolution](#), [exoneration](#), [remission](#), [dispensation](#),
[indulgence](#), [clemency](#), [mercy](#);

synonyms: [reprieve](#), [amnesty](#);

archaic [shrift](#)

"we beg your forgiveness"

antonyms: mercilessness, [punishment](#)

Origin

Old English *forgiefenes*, from *forgiefen* (past participle of *forgiefan* 'forgive') + the noun suffix *-nes*.

Translate forgiveness to

Use over time for: forgiveness

What is a definition for forgiveness?

A definition for forgiveness could be -- giving up my right to hurt you, for hurting me. It is impossible to live on this fallen planet without getting hurt, offended, misunderstood, lied to, and rejected. Learning how to respond properly is one of the basics of the Christian life.

The word "forgive" means to wipe the slate clean, to pardon, to cancel a debt. When we wrong someone, we seek his or her forgiveness in order for the relationship to be restored. It is important to remember that forgiveness is not granted because a person deserves to be forgiven. Instead, it is an act of love, mercy, and grace.

How we act toward that person may change. It doesn't mean we will put ourselves back into a harmful situation or that we suddenly accept or approve of the person's continued wrong behavior. It simply means we release them from the wrong they committed against us. We forgive them because God forgave us ([Ephesians 4:31-32](#) and [Romans 5:8](#)).

What does God say about forgiveness?

- The Bible gives us much instruction when it comes to forgiveness.
- We forgive because we have been forgiven by God ([Ephesians 4:32](#)).
- We forgive in obedience to God ([Matthew 6:14-15](#); [Romans 12:18](#)).
- We forgive others to gain control of our lives from hurt emotions ([Genesis 4:1-8](#)).
- We forgive so we won't become bitter and defile those around us ([Hebrews 12:14-15](#)).

What if I don't feel like forgiving others?

There are times we don't feel like forgiving those who have wronged us. It is easier to act our way into feeling than to feel our way into acting. Having a nature of not forgiving others brings about bitterness, and bitterness has been linked to stress-related illnesses by some medical researchers. By forgiving others, we free ourselves spiritually and emotionally. Forgiveness is an act of our own personal will in obedience and submission to God's will, trusting God to bring emotional healing.

How can I help those struggling with forgiveness?

People who have experienced abuse, trauma, or loss need time to sort things out and let God bring them to the place of forgiveness in His time. God's timing is always the right time for each individual. The act of forgiving others is between us and God. The only time we need to forgive a person face-to-face is at the moment we are asked by that person to forgive them for the hurt they have caused.

There are things we can do to help those struggling with the forgiveness of others. We can support them with encouraging words and by listening to them. Taking our time and being gentle with them will allow them to progress through the steps of forgiveness the way God wants them to proceed.

A prayer of forgiveness

Dear God, I choose as an act of my will, regardless of my feelings, to forgive the person who has wronged me. I release them, and I set myself free to Your healing. With Your help, I will no longer dwell on the situation or continue to talk about it. I thank You for forgiving me as I have forgiven them. I thank You for releasing me. I ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

The Gift of Forgiveness

Read | [Colossians 3:12-17](#)

Webster defines *gift* as “something given to show friendship, affection, support.” Using this definition, it seems logical to give gifts only to those we love, not to those who hurt or abuse us. Yet scripture clearly commands us to offer one of the greatest possible gifts—forgiveness—to those who mistreat us.

To forgive means “to give up all claims to punish or exact a penalty for an offense.” No strings or conditions can be attached, or else it ceases to be a pardon. [Ephesians 2:8-9](#) expands on this concept by contrasting the gift of salvation with works. Neither salvation nor forgiveness can be earned; both must be freely given. Just as God granted us forgiveness, which we did not deserve and could not earn, so we are to release every offender from any form of penalty.

Unforgiveness is emotional bondage that consumes minds with memories of offenses, distorts emotions with revenge, and fills hearts with churning unrest. Its tentacles reach deep into the soul, affecting both spiritual and physical health. But the one who chooses to put on love and offer forgiveness is ready to receive the peace of Christ. Let God’s Word help you release hurt and anger into His caring hands—then watch as vengeful thoughts are transformed into praise and gratitude to the Lord.

Thankfully, the gift of pardon is not something we have to manufacture in ourselves. This present is wrapped in the love of God and tied with the red ribbon of Christ’s sacrifice. It is freely given to us by the Savior, and our job is simply to pass it on to others.