



Forgiveness

***A Three Syllable Word That
Will Change Your Life***

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Forgiveness

Forgiveness is hard sometimes. I get it. You can forgive your child again and again for leaving his bike in the driveway, but can you forgive your spouse for cheating on you? You can forgive the checker at the grocery store who is so slow and has a line of ten people waiting. You know she is training and will become faster with experience.

But can you forgive the man who mugged you in the grocery store parking lot? Can you forgive your best friend for spreading a rumor about you? Let's go deeper. Can you forgive the father that molested you or the drunk father who beat you every Saturday night after returning home from the bar?

Yet, God's word tells us, "But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins" (Mt 6:15, {NIV}).

Sometimes we hold onto past hurts from childhood and drag them along into our adulthood when we should have buried them in the sandbox years ago and moved on. Unforgiveness is a heavy burden to carry. Forgiveness, on the other hand, frees us. It lets us move past the hurt and into the life God has waiting for us.

To move in the direction of forgiveness, it helps to remember these four things:

1. Forgiveness doesn't mean you forget.
2. Just because you don't feel like you forgave, doesn't mean you haven't forgiven.
3. Forgiveness is for us, the offended, not the offender.
4. We may need God's help to forgive.

Point Number 1: Forgiving doesn't mean your memories are erased. Don't let Satan fool you into believing that you haven't forgiven because you haven't forgotten. You remember, but the pain lessens until one day you talk about it or remember it, and it doesn't trigger angry or tearful emotions in you. It's just part of who you are, where you came from. Don't let the past dictate your future. The Bible says, "You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy. . ." (Ps 30:11, {NIV}).

Point Number 2: You live by faith, not by feelings. So, you can forgive but still feel as if you haven't. This can confuse your mind. You may think, "I must not have forgiven him because I still think about it," or "I still hate him." Don't confuse forgiveness with healing. You can forgive someone but still be hurt. It takes time for emotional and physical wounds to mend. The Bible says, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past" (Is 43:18, {NIV}). You can forgive and move on. Pray about it. Let God lead you.

Point Number 3: Holding onto past hurt and staying angry at the offender does you no good. They may not know they hurt you, don't care, or have forgotten and moved on. It does hurt the offended, though. It robs you of your joy and peace. It causes undue stress. The person already hurt you. Why let them continue to abuse you by staying angry and bitter? Remember Jesus said, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (Jn 10:10, {NIV}). Let it go. You may need help in this area, leading us to **Number 4** on the list.

Point Number 4: Sometimes, we need God's help to be able to forgive. God's grace gives us the ability to forgive when we can't. What is grace? Simply put, grace means God steps in with his sovereign ability and gives you the capability to do what you cannot do on your own. Pray for help with forgiving. Thank God that you forgive this person. Let God help you. You

don't need to do this all on your own. The Bible tells us, "Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Mt 19:26, {NIV}).

You got this!

About the Author

Kelly D Smith has a Master's degree in Special Education with twenty-five-plus years of experience. She teaches middle school students with moderate/severe disabilities. Senator Morrell awarded her *The Woman of Distinction* for the city of Menifee in 2017. She has also been awarded *The President's Lifetime Achievement Award* and *The President's Volunteer Service Award*, 2016, recognized by seated President Obama.

Kelly is a #1 Best-selling author and dynamic speaker. Her book, *Your Amazing Itty, Bitty Book on Faith, 15 Chapters to Overcome Fear and Live a Life of Victory*, is available in digital and paperback from Amazon. Kelly wrote two E-books available on her website. She is also the co-author of five books, including two best-sellers in the United States and internationally. Kelly writes for Christian and secular markets.

