

A photograph of a stone archway in a ruined building. The arch is made of light-colored stone blocks and is set within a larger wall of similar stone. The ground in the foreground is covered in rubble, including broken stones and wooden planks. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The text "REBUILDING the GATES" is overlaid on the image in a large, black, serif font. "REBUILDING" is in all caps and is the largest word. "the" is in lowercase and is smaller. "GATES" is in all caps and is the same size as "REBUILDING".

REBUILDING
the
GATES

Biblical Forgiveness Principles

The background image shows a stone archway in a ruined building. The arch is made of large, light-colored stone blocks. The ground in front of the arch is covered in rubble and debris, including broken stones and wooden planks. A simple wooden railing is positioned in front of the arch. The overall scene is one of destruction and decay.

- Forgiveness is linked to Spiritual Authority. (Matt 18)
- Choosing what we reproduce. (Heb 12)
- Forgiveness affects both parties.
- Forgiveness leads to freedom.

Forgiveness leads to freedom

Eph 4:20 - 24

20 That, however, is not the way of life you learned 21 when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. 22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Forgiveness leads to freedom

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Rom 5:5, '...the love of God has been shed abroad (poured out) in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.'

Forgiveness leads to freedom

Col 3:10 - 14

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all. Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; bearing with one another; and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another, *even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. BUT ABOVE ALL THESE THINGS, PUT ON LOVE*, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body, and be thankful.”

Forgiveness leads to freedom

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Col 3:13 - 14 (NIV)

13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. **FORGIVE AS THE LORD FORGAVE YOU.** 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Forgiveness leads to freedom

John 3:16

“For God so LOVED the WORLD, that he GAVE HIS only BEGOTTEN Son, that WHOEVER believes in HIM should not perish, but have ETERNAL LIFE.”

- What did God do — He gave.
- What did He give — Everything.
- Why did He give — Because He loved.
- Who did He love — The world; those who did not know they needed Him.
- For what purpose — To set them free.

Forgiveness leads to freedom

Rom 12:14 - 21

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. 17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. 20 Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Leadership - Influence or control?

The real question on spiritual authority is not, 'does it exist', but rather, 'how is it to be exercised'. This will depend on how we define 'spiritual authority'. Jesus made it abundantly clear that what he meant by authority was influencing the flock by serving it.

The only right use of spiritual authority is to SERVE others.

- *Floyd McClung* -

Leadership - Influence or control?

Luke 22: 24 - 26

24 Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. 25 And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' 26 But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. 27 For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.

Forgiveness towards authority

2 Cor 6:11 - 7:4

11 O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open. 12 You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections. 13 Now in return for the same (I speak as to children), you also be open.

14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? 15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

Forgiveness towards authority

A photograph of a stone archway in a ruined building, with rubble on the ground and a wooden railing in front of the arch. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an interior or a shaded area. The archway is made of large, rectangular stone blocks. The ground is covered in a large pile of broken stones and debris. A simple wooden railing is positioned in front of the archway. The overall atmosphere is one of desolation and decay.

“I will dwell in them
And walk among them.
I will be their God,
And they shall be My people.”

17 Therefore
“Come out from among them
And be separate, says the Lord.
Do not touch what is unclean,
And I will receive you.”

Forgiveness towards authority

A photograph of a stone archway in a ruined building, with rubble on the ground and a wooden railing in front of the arch. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark grey filter.

18

“I will be a Father to you,
And you shall be My sons and daughters,
Says the LORD Almighty.”

Forgiveness towards authority

1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Open your hearts to us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have cheated no one. 3 I do not say this to condemn; for I have said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. 4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation.

Forgiveness towards authority

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There is a difference between PERCEIVED hurt and INTENTIONAL hurt, yet to the one who was hurt, they feel the same.

Forgiveness towards authority

Percieved Hurt:

- A. Walking according to the flesh (1:12, 17 and 10:13)
- B. Being deceitful (2:17, 4:2 and 12:16)
- C. Intimidating the Church with letters (10:9 - 10)
- D. Unjustly treating someone (7:2)
- E. Defrauding people (7:2)

Forgiveness towards authority

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- We opened our hearts to you.
- Open your hearts to us:
- We have wronged no one
- We have corrupted no one.
- We have cheated no one.
- We live and die together

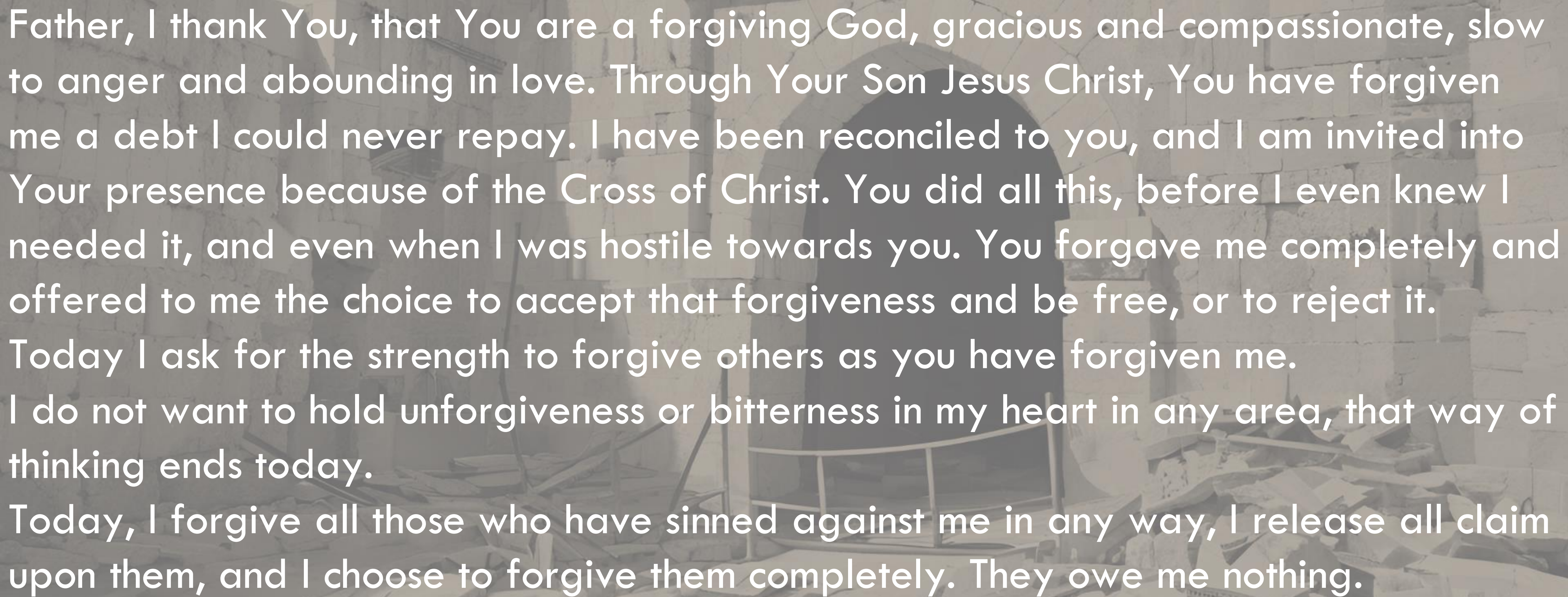
How to Forgive

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1. It's an act of your will.
2. Their forgiveness is not necessary.
3. Forgiveness does not always mean reconciliation.
4. People are not aware what it's done to you.

How to Forgive

- A prayer of forgiveness / write a letter
 - Be as specific as you can.
- Pray out loud, I FORGIVE _____.
- Bless them
- Go to them (if needed)

The background image shows a stone archway in a ruined building. The walls are made of large, light-colored stone blocks. The floor is covered in rubble and debris, including broken stones and wooden planks. A metal railing is visible in the foreground, partially obscuring the view of the archway. The overall scene is one of destruction and decay.

Father, I thank You, that You are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Through Your Son Jesus Christ, You have forgiven me a debt I could never repay. I have been reconciled to you, and I am invited into Your presence because of the Cross of Christ. You did all this, before I even knew I needed it, and even when I was hostile towards you. You forgave me completely and offered to me the choice to accept that forgiveness and be free, or to reject it. Today I ask for the strength to forgive others as you have forgiven me. I do not want to hold unforgiveness or bitterness in my heart in any area, that way of thinking ends today. Today, I forgive all those who have sinned against me in any way, I release all claim upon them, and I choose to forgive them completely. They owe me nothing.

How to Forgive

I choose to forgive:

1. _____ for _____

2. _____ for _____

How to Forgive

I pray a blessing over them today:

- Salvation to them
- Freedom to their hearts
- Healing, breakthrough, peace...

I put an axe to the root of unforgiveness and bitterness in my life, I thank you for your cleansing blood, that washes me whiter than snow.

Thank you Lord that IN YOU, I am free.

How to Forgive

FOR YOURSELF:

I choose today to forgive myself where I have made mistakes, in all the areas where I have deep regrets, shame and guilt - Today I let them go and I 'cast all my cares upon the Lord', who by His blood and in His mercy has already paid for them all — they will no longer hold me back or keep me stuck where I am.

How to Forgive

FOR ANOTHER:

Prov 26:17

“He who passes by and meddles in a quarrel not his own
Is like one who takes a dog by the ears.”

Lord, I've picked up a dog, and now I can't put it down, my view of this person has been affected based on another persons lens or experience.

- Forgive me
- I forgive them.

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