

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. How often do we say this line in the course of a day and how often so we actually do that? Sometimes it is very difficult to get over the hurt that someone inflicts on us. And how many times do we hurt ourselves reminding ourselves of how much it hurt. So maybe we have a bit of masochism, that we relish the pain that we like the feeling of the victim? How many of us carry this pain and anger over the years and let it secretly eat away at us? That we entrap ourselves by this.

Forgiveness is mustering up genuine [compassion](#) for those who have wronged us, and moving on from the past, instead of allowing bitterness and [anger](#) toward others eat away at us. Although burying the hatchet usually brings peace to the soul. Equally, and perhaps more important, is learning to acknowledge your missteps and forgive yourself. Self-forgiveness is often the first step toward a more loving and positive relationship with yourself, and therefore with others.

When you forgive someone do you feel like you're letting them off the hook? Do you feel like you're making an excuse for their behavior? Contrary to what we may think, forgiveness isn't any of these things. It's not saying that what's wrong is okay. It's not forgetting hurt feelings. Forgiveness is extending grace. It's commanded by God, and it's something you can do for others . . . and for yourself.

Notice the word "give" in "forgive." When you forgive, you give someone a gift – you waive a penalty – and you give yourself the gift of grudge-free living. When you withhold forgiveness, you not only refuse to offer what God has given to you, but you also hurt yourself. Unforgiveness bears down on your heart and gets in the way of spiritual growth. God knows it's not easy to forgive, but He wouldn't ask you to do something without giving you the strength to do it! Ask Him for the ability to forgive freely as you have been forgiven. He's the Master of the impossible

Your birth is God saying that You Matter, that you have an indispensable contribution to make to the world. Since your contribution is essential, no problem can impede you from achieving the purpose for which you were created. God gives you the resources to overcome every pain and obstacle, to heal from every hurt or abuse.

The ability to forgive is one of the resources that God has given you. But it is up to you to use it. Forgiveness in Hebrew is "mechilah," which connects to the root of the word "mochul," meaning a circle. Life is meant to be a circle encompassing all our experiences and relationships in one harmonious, seamless, whole. When someone hurts us the circle is broken. Forgiveness is the way we mend the fracture.

Forgiveness means not merely forgiving the person who hurt us, but forgiving ourselves, forgiving God, forgiving even life itself with all its bizarre and often cruel twists and turns.

Forgiveness is letting go and building the confidence necessary to experience healthy and positive growth. It is declaring that you will no longer remain locked in the past as a victim of circumstances; that you will no longer perpetuate negative life-patterns through blame and anger; that you will instead access the strength and love that God gives you day by day, moment by moment in order to fulfill the unique and singular purpose for which you and only you were created.

Forgiveness requires work. But, most importantly, it requires a connection to God, the Giver of life. When you remember that your birth is God's way of saying You Matter, that you are vital and important, irreplaceable and essential to the perfection of God's world, then you can rise above the pain others have caused you and find the love and strength to forgive both them and yourself.

When you forgive, the circle is again complete and you find yourself encompassed by the whole of God's creation and feel yourself to be an integral part. When you forgive, you have taken control of your life, rather than being a victim of it.

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