



## LEARNING TO FORGIVE



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### 4 WEEKS

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1. What Does it Mean to Forgive
  2. What Makes Forgiving So Hard
  3. How to Forgive
  4. Challenges
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## FORGIVING TIMOTHY McVEIGH

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## LUKE 6:27-38

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“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you. “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

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## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FORGIVE?

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- **Forgive** = *for* (utmost/ultimate) + *give* (gift, present)
    - When we forgive another, we are giving the *ultimate gift* we can give to another...
    - And it's the ultimate gift we can give ourselves...
    - What is the gift we give ourselves?
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## THOUGHTS ON FORGIVENESS

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- **People often confuse forgiving with condoning**
    - Condoning is ignoring, justifying, allowing, or approving
    - Forgiving is restoring, transforming, and unburdening
  - **People often confuse forgiving with forgetting**
    - Forgiving *is not* forgetting, but it does transform our memories so that we see the past differently
    - In this way, it actually has the power to change the past
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## MICHAEL MORTON

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## THOUGHTS ON FORGIVENESS

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- **People often confuse forgiving with capitulation:**
    - Capitulation continues to make us a victim of the other.
    - Forgiving is letting go of victimhood and reclaiming our lives.
  - **People often confuse forgiving with weakness:**
    - It actually takes tremendous strength to forgive—the deeper the pain, the more the strength
    - When we hold onto the pain and let it dominate our lives, that weakens us.
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## THOUGHTS ON FORGIVENESS

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- We cannot be truly giving and generous without being forgiving because when we fail to forgive we are holding back.
  - When we forgive another or others, we are choosing to live in a spiritual way grounded in love and God's desire for us.
  - When we refuse to forgive, we are grounding our lives in resentment, anger, hurt, and self-protectiveness—all states that inhibit love and a connection with God
    - Nelson Mandela: *"Resentment is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemies."*
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## MARK 2:1-12

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When he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and he said to them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and take your mat and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" —he said to the paralytic— "I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home." And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

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## THOUGHTS ON FORGIVENESS

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- Forgiving is healing—a healing for ourselves and/or others
  - In the same way, judging, condemning, vengeance, ridicule are all scarring and actually promote sinfulness in ourselves and others.
  - Forgiving is rooted in God and grace
    - *Corrie ten Boom*
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## LUKE 23:32-34, 39-43

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Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing..."

One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

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