

**Title:** The Power of Forgiveness

**Scripture Focus:**

“Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord.” —Romans 12:19 (NIV)

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” —Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

**Overview**

Forgiveness is one of the hardest things God asks us to do, but it is also one of the most freeing. Forgiveness does not mean pretending the hurt never happened, minimizing the pain, or excusing the wrong. It means releasing the debt, surrendering vengeance to God, and refusing to let bitterness keep you bound.

Many people think forgiveness is a feeling, but forgiveness starts as a decision. It is an act of obedience that opens the door for healing. When we forgive, we are not declaring the offense acceptable—we are choosing freedom over bondage and peace over bitterness.

**Key Points**

**1. Forgiveness Is a Choice, Not a Feeling**

If you wait until you feel ready to forgive, you may stay stuck for a long time. Forgiveness begins with a choice of the will. It is not about denying the pain; it is about deciding that pain will no longer rule your heart.

We do not wait to be healed before we forgive. Often, forgiveness is the first step that begins the healing process.

**2. Forgiveness Frees You, Not Just the Offender**

Unforgiveness keeps people trapped in cycles of pain, anger, and emotional exhaustion. The person who hurt you may move on, but bitterness keeps wounding you from within. Forgiveness lifts that weight and releases you from carrying what God never meant for you to keep holding.

Freedom comes when you stop replaying the offense and surrender the burden to God.

**3. You Are Letting Them Off Your Hook, Not God’s**

Romans 12:19 reminds us that vengeance belongs to the Lord. Forgiveness does not remove accountability from God’s hands. It simply means you are no longer trying to take His place as judge.



God sees every wound, every injustice, and every offense. He is righteous, wise, and just. You can forgive because you trust Him to handle what you cannot.

#### **4. Forgiveness Is Choosing Freedom in the Middle of Consequences**

Sometimes forgiveness does not erase the consequences of what happened. Some wounds leave lasting effects. But even when consequences remain, bitterness does not have to. Forgiveness says, “I will not keep reliving this offense. I choose peace over poison.”

Bitter people rehearse the pain. Forgiven people release it.

#### **5. Do Not Wait—Act on Forgiveness Today**

Forgiveness is too important to postpone. Delayed forgiveness often deepens pain and gives bitterness room to grow. God calls us to forgive from the heart and to seek forgiveness humbly when we are the ones who have caused harm.

When asking others for forgiveness:

- Own your wrong without excuses
- Do not shift the blame
- Be humble, honest, and present

#### **Reflection**

Is there someone you need to forgive?

Is there someone from whom you need to seek forgiveness?

Have you been holding on to hurt in a way that is keeping you bound?

#### **Prayer**

Lord, I thank You for the forgiveness You have shown me through Christ. Help me choose forgiveness even when it is hard. I release the hurt, the offense, and the desire for revenge into Your hands. Set me free from bitterness, and teach me to walk in the healing, peace, and grace You provide. In Jesus' name, Amen.