

How does it feel when others wrong you & God tells you to forgive them?

**Human interaction is illustrated by the Relational Balloons.**

We each have a limited capacity of how much hurt & pain we can absorb before we explode.

**Hebrews 12:15** (NLT)

Look after each other so that none of you fails to receive the grace of God. Watch out that no poisonous root of bitterness grows up to trouble you, corrupting many.

Allowing bitterness to grow in our hearts is like drinking poison thinking we are hurting the other person. In reality, we are hurting ourselves even more!

The Bible tells us to deal with bitterness before it grows.

Forgiving others may not seem fair, yet it sets you free!

**Ephesians 4:31** (NASB)

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

English Bible translations have difficulty capturing the nuance of this Command.

**Ephesians 4:31** (NIV)

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.

Because the command is in the Passive voice, a better translation is:

**Ephesians 4:31** (TLT)

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be removed from you, along with all malice.

**Forgiveness is illustrated when we include God in the Relational Balloons.**

When we release the things in our my hearts that are not of God, He removes them from us.

Forgiveness goes beyond releasing the bad, we are also called to respond with the good.

**Ephesians 4:32** (NASB)

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

“To err is human, to forgive, divine.” – *Alexander Pope, An Essay on Criticism*

We cannot give forgiveness as God would have us without receiving His Divine goodness.

**Ephesians 5:18** (NASB)

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit.

Rather than Reacting to the hurt & pain you feel when wrongly treated,  
Release the things not of God  
Receive the things of God  
Respond with the goodness of God

All relationships will breakdown or be less than they can be if forgiveness is not in the equation.

What difference will it make when forgiveness is practiced in the home, school, workplace & church?

It doesn't seem fair, yet it sets us free!