

Encounter Church
Sunday July 19, 2026

Empowered and Unstoppable
Empowered to Forgive

2 Timothy 3:1-3 (NLT)- “You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good.

Now let's compare the above verse with what Jesus taught.

Matthew 6:14-15 (NLT)- “If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

What does the Bible say about forgiveness? Do I have to forgive?

How do I forgive the unforgivable?

Luke 23:32-34 (NLT)- “Two others, both criminals, were led out to be executed with him. When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing.” And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice.”

Notice that right after Jesus ask the Father to forgive them it immediately says, the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice.

As if they didn't even hear Jesus. ***Maybe, just maybe, this is telling us that this moment of forgiveness was more for Jesus than it was the people around Him!***

Jesus was a sinless sacrifice! He couldn't die with unforgiveness in His heart!

Think about it, the creation was mocking the creator, and He said, “Father, forgive them!”

How do you forgive the unforgivable. Some of you are having a struggle forgiving yourself! Some are really struggling with forgiving someone! You just can't seem to let it go!!!

HOW DO WE FORGIVE?

1. Pray for those who hurt you.

Luke 6:28 (NLT)- “Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you.”

Right attitude precedes right action!

Praying for those who wounded you is often is one of the first practical steps toward genuine forgiveness!

My heart has to change before I ever get close to doing the right thing!

Matthew 5:43-44 (NLT)- “You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor ’and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!”

Your prayers for others may not change them but they always change you!

HOW DO WE FORGIVE? PRAY FOR THOSE WHO HURT YOU!

2. Forgive as you have been forgiven.

Colossians 3:12-14 (MSG)- “So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you. And regardless of what else you put on, wear love. It’s your basic, all-purpose garment. Never be without it. “Tolerate the weaknesses of those in the family of faith, forgiving one another in the same way you have been graciously forgiven by Jesus Christ. If you find fault with someone, release this same gift of forgiveness to them.”

JESUS TAUGHT THAT OUR ABILITY TO FORGIVE FLOWS FROM RECOGNIZING GOD’S FORGIVENESS TOWARD US.

Matthew 18:21-35 (NLT)- “Then Peter came to him and asked, “Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?” “No, not seven times,” Jesus replied, “but seventy times seven! “Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. He couldn’t pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt.

“But the man fell down before his master and begged him, ‘Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.’ Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt. “But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment.“His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it,’ he pleaded. But his creditor wouldn’t wait. He had the

man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full. “When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt. “That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart.”

I don’t know what you’ve been forgiven of but I’ve been forgiven of so so much!

FORGIVE AS YOU’VE BEEN FORGIVEN!

IF I CHOOSE TO FORGIVE, IT WON’T CHANGE THE PAST, BUT IT CAN CHANGE THE FUTURE!

When we forgive we set a prisoner free and we realize the prisoner is US!

CONCLUSION: Are you ready to receive your forgiveness? Are you ready to forgive?

Are you ready to be free?

Ultimately, forgiveness reflects the heart of the gospel! We forgive not because people deserve it, but because Christ has forgiven us!

Ephesians 4:31-32- (NLT)- “Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.”

Forgiveness is one of the clearest ways the character of Jesus is displayed in the life of His followers!

Let’s pray!