

PLEASE FORGIVE MY BITTERNESS

³¹Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³²Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Ephesians 4:31-32

Forgiveness – to give up resentment, to pardon, to give up a claim of retribution.

Bitterness – indignation brought on when someone wrongs us.

THE QUESTION: How can you truly forgive someone if they are not asking for your forgiveness?

THE ANSWER: God has shown us how to live.

Forgiveness heals the offender and the offended.

Forgiveness in its fullest sense requires:

1. The offender recognizing the wrong they have committed.
2. The offender experiencing sincere remorse.
3. The offender asking for forgiveness.

The Bible instructs us to forgive. (Matthew 18:21-35, Luke 17:3-4)

Does this apply to those who never ask for our forgiveness?

Additional biblical principles to consider:

1. Love your enemy. (Matthew 5:43-48)

⁹Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.

1 Peter 3:9

2. Endure

¹²Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Colossians 3:12-13

THE RESULT: We treat others with kindness even when they do not deserve it.

THE MOTIVATION: God knows and He cares.

Jesus is our High Priest

- Ordained after the order of Melchizedek. (Hebrews 5:5-6)
- Offered Himself for our sin. (Hebrews 7:26-27)
- A sacrifice that would only be required once. (Hebrews 9:12)
- Became a man in order to serve as our High Priest. (Hebrews 2:9)
- A High Priest who knows our struggles.

¹⁴Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:14-16

THE KEY: It is enough that God knows.

¹⁹For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. ²⁰For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. ²¹For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ²²He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, **but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.** ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Peter 2:19-25

Is it enough for us that our heavenly Father knows?

Is God real to us today?

If it is enough for us that God knows then we can treat others better than they deserve, we can treat them better than they treat us.

If it is enough for us that God knows, then we can forgive, love our enemies, and endure.

**THE BIBLE
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