

# WHY FORGIVE?

There may not be anything that we can do in this life that initially seems more difficult than forgiving. It just seems so contrary to what comes natural.

At the same time, it could be that there aren't many things that we can do that are more needful. Most people live the majority of their life carrying around within them a load of hatred and bitterness. Some have it buried so far below the surface that they don't even know they possess it until something triggers a response that it rises to the surface.

## REASONS TO FORGIVE

Here is my list of the top 12 Reasons to Forgive. We should forgive because:

- 1) God tells us to forgive and He knows what is best.
- 2) God has forgiven us eternally based simply on the basis of our faith.
- 3) We need temporal forgiveness on a daily basis to maintain fellowship with Him.
- 4) Forgiveness rids of us carrying the burden of bitterness.
- 5) God Himself provides us both the example and the strength to forgive.
- 6) Forgiveness brings joy to both the giver and the receiver.
- 7) Forgiveness opens the door for love to enter.
- 8) Forgiveness demonstrates God's power.
- 9) Forgiveness encourages others to become forgivers also.
- 10) Forgiveness frees and motivates the forgiven to appreciate God more.
- 11) Forgiveness paves the way for relationships to grow.
- 12) Forgiveness is a seed that can produce much fruit!

Now, let's take a closer look at those.

### 1) God tells us to forgive and He knows what is best.

The mere fact that God tells us to forgive should be enough. We are to be obedient regardless to how we feel. He is the perfect one. We are flawed and our perception of what is right is tainted at best. Anytime our desire conflicts with His command, it is we who are wrong!

*Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*

(Colossians 3:12-13)

*Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

(Ephesians 4:31-32)

*Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, for anger rests in the bosom of fools.*

(Ecclesiastes 7:9)

### 2) God has forgiven us eternally based simply on the basis of our faith.

Jesus (God in the flesh) paid for all sin (Hebrews 2:9, 1 John 2:1-2) and offers eternal life to us as a gift – not something we can ever deserve (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; Romans 4:5).

*Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.*

(Acts 13:38-39)

### 3) We need temporal forgiveness on a daily basis to maintain fellowship with Him.

We are told that we must forgive to be forgiven.

*“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”*

(Matthew 6:14-15)

*If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

(1 John 1:6-9)

This was written to believers—those who already have eternal forgiveness but still need a temporal forgiveness to maintain fellowship with their Heavenly Father.

### 4) Forgiveness rids of us carrying the burden of bitterness.

Forgiveness and bitterness cannot coexist. Just as darkness disappears with the entrance of light, so bitterness is extinguished with the infusion of forgiveness. Bitterness weighs us down just as does excess weight when attempting to run a race. Bitterness affects our physical, mental, and spiritual health. Our bitterness also defiles others, especially those closest to us. In the final analysis, there is nothing beneficial that comes from bitterness.

*Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of*

*God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;*

(Hebrews 12:14-15)

**5) God Himself provides us both the example and the strength to forgive.**

There is no better example than God Himself. Jesus, as God in fleshly form, walked among those who sought to destroy him and who eventually crucified him. His words, “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing” should serve as our ultimate example.

Jesus died to pay the penalty of sin and offers forgiveness and eternal life to all who will believe him for it. Since he forgives us countless sins, what big thing is it for us to forgive a few that are committed against us.

**6) Forgiveness brings joy to both the giver and the receiver.**

Just as bitterness produces hatred, depression, sickness and pain, forgiveness produces joy, peace, love, and friendships.

**7) Forgiveness opens the door for love to enter.**

It is difficult, if not impossible, to love someone you cannot forgive.

*Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.*

(Romans 12:9-10)

**8) Forgiveness demonstrates God’s power.**

Many admit they cannot forgive someone who has greatly hurt them. With God’s help, they can forgive and demonstrate God’s power. I’ve often heard it said of a forgiver, “If he can forgive, there must be a God.”

**9) Forgiveness encourages others to become forgivers also.**

When others observe the change in you after you have forgiven a great offense, they often become so impressed that they decide to try it also. It is always exciting to witness the newfound joy in a person who has recently become a forgiver.

**10) Forgiveness frees and motivates the forgiven to appreciate God more.**

We love God because He first loved us. In the same way, when we forgive someone and they see it was due to God at work in our life, they develop and even greater love and appreciation for Him.

**11) Forgiveness paves the way for relationships to grow.**

A plant left in a small pot will become dwarfed. In the same way a wall between two individuals prevents real fellowship.

**12) Forgiveness is a seed that can produce much fruit!**

It has been said that “any fool can count the seeds in an apple but only God can count the apples in a seed.” One simple act of forgiveness can become like a spark starting a huge forest fire.

**Summary.**

Contrary to our natural inclination, to forgive is always better than harboring bitterness and hatred. As you have just read, there are so many advantages.

Forgiveness becomes easier with practice. We are creatures of habit. If we develop the habit of forgiving, we find it much easier to do it when it would otherwise seem impossible.

Why do anything half-heartedly? Most Christians are not effective and productive

because they only half-heartedly serve God. Don’t allow this—be a forgiver!

**For more information on forgiveness, contact:**

# WHY FORGIVE?

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*We must make a choice – a choice  
to “forgive and live” or to remain  
“bitter and taste death.”*