

## Forgiveness

### Canceling of Guilt

**“For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”**

**Matthew 6:14-15.**

**The Greek word, *aphete: aphese*, occurs one hundred forty times in the New Testament. This Greek term means to let go, to leave behind, to dismiss, to cancel a debt. It refers to the forgiveness of sins provided by God.**

**God’s forgiveness towards each of us is contingent upon each of our willingness to forgive the offenses of others.**

**If we are unwilling to forgive those who do us wrong, God will not forgive us and our prayers will be to no avail.**

**Unforgiveness seeds a bitter root, which is a deep-seated resentment in one’s heart that continues to grow and defile the unforgiving person making him or her unfit to approach God in prayer. If not dealt with, the bitter root can also spread and defile many others in the church community, destroying the holiness without which “no one will see the Lord.” (Heb. 12:14-15)**

### Unless You Forgive

**“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart”**

**Matthew 18:35**

**In the parable of the unmerciful servant a servant was brought before the king. The servant begged for the king’s mercy and forgiveness and promised to repay his debt. The king took pity upon the servant and canceled his debt. This servant encountered a fellow servant who owed him a small amount. The fellow servant begged for his mercy; however, the servant had no mercy upon him and had the fellow servant thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. The many servants who witnessed this ran to tell the king, who was greatly disappointed. In turn, he turned over the servant to the jailers to be tortured, until he was able to pay back his debt.**

**“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.” Mark 11:26**

### **Three Essential Elements To Birth Forgiveness**

1. An **Offence** has been committed against you.
2. An **Offender** committed the offence.
3. A **Cancellation** of the Offence

**\*To forgive is to leave the punishment for the offence you encountered, up to God.**

**\*True forgiveness does not rally in punishing others or oneself.**

**\*Revenge will never bring true forgiveness or healing.**

**\*Unforgiveness leads bitterness, and bitterness will consume you**

**“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, for giving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Eph 4:31-32**

### **Forgiveness Myths**

**Myth #1: “If I forgive, then I will be hurt again.”**

**Truth #1: Forgiveness is NOT going to hurt you.**

**Myth #2: “If I forgive, then that means what was done to me is O.K.”**

**Truth #2: Forgiveness does NOT mean that what happened to you was alright.**

**Myth #3: “If I forgive, then I will have to trust them or spend time with them.”**

**Truth #3: Forgiveness does NOT mean that you have to trust that person or spend time with them.**

**Myth #4: “Unforgiveness has no impact on how I deal with my life.”**

**Truth #4: Unforgiveness binds you to the past by focusing your attention on the hurts.**

**Myth #5: “To forgive is to forget.”**

**Truth #5: Only God has the ability to forgive and forget.**

**Myth #6: “I don’t have to forgive my offender(s).”**

**Truth #6: Forgiveness is the focal point of the Christian faith.**

**Myth #7: “My offender(s) will have to make things right with me before I can forgive them.”**

**Truth #7: Your offender(s) do not deserve your forgiveness, anymore than you deserve God’s forgiveness.**

### **Forgiveness Myths: Continued**

**Myth #8: “ I need to confront my offender(s) to show that I have really forgiven them.”**

**Truth #8: Confrontation is an entirely different issue than forgiveness.**

**Myth #9: “Forgiveness has no impact on my relationship with God.”**

**Truth #9: You need to ask God to forgive you for your unforgiveness and bitterness.**

**Myth #10: “My offender(s) took something from me or hurt me without my permission.**

**Truth #10: Bitterness means that I have given the offender the rest of my life with my permission.**

### **Prayer of Forgiveness**

**Dear Heavenly Father,**

**I admit that I have not been kind, patient, and loving to my offender(s). I have been separated from others and also You, because of my bitterness. I choose to exercise my will to forgive my offender(s) as You, Father, have forgiven me. Lord, search my heart and reveal any hidden or secret unforgiveness or bitterness towards others. I repent, forgive and release my offender(s). I ask You, Heavenly Father, to forgive me and restore me, as I forgive those who have offended me.**

**In Jesus’ Name,  
Amen.**