

What it Means to Forgive and Why it Matters

We live our lives in a sin-filled world: brokenness and grievances will happen. God calls us to forgive those who sin against us, but we understandably have questions about how exactly that plays out in our everyday lives. Let's explore Scripture to learn what forgiveness is and what it is not. We'll discover how our ability to forgive others grows out of God's forgiveness and find help in dealing with the strong emotions that so often surround forgiveness.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- What makes forgiveness feel easy in some circumstances but difficult in others?
- What do you think it means to “forgive as God forgave you” ([Ephesians 4:32](#), [Colossians 3:13](#))?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [What it Means to Forgive and Why it Matters](#)

READ [Ephesians 4:31-32](#), [Colossians 3:12-13](#), [Matthew 18:21-35](#), [Romans 12:17-21](#), [Psalm 13:1-2](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- In segment 1, host Scott Hoezee said, “God’s forgiveness is the pattern for our lives...We are going to do what we have seen God doing...Forgiveness of others is part of how that grace works its way into our relationships.” How does recognizing our forgiveness of others as an extension of God’s grace impact your willingness to offer forgiveness?
- Host Darrell Delaney told us that forgiveness is a gift, whereas reconciliation is a shared commitment to rebuild trust, meaning it is possible to forgive even if reconciliation or full restoration may not be. Why is this a valuable distinction to understand?
- What do you think of Darrell’s reflection on Jonah, specifically his definition of what he called *Jonah syndrome*: “we want to receive mercy for ourselves, but judgment for others”? Does this resonate with you? Why or why not?
- In segment 3, Scott and Darrell discussed [Romans 12:17-21](#) and [Psalm 13](#) to help us learn what we can do when we struggle to forgive: 1) lament, bring the struggle to God, 2) ask and allow the Holy Spirit to help, and 3) remember forgiveness is a process and a journey, it’s ok if you feel like you have to start over or keep trying. What does it mean to you that you don’t have to walk through the process of forgiveness alone?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Matthew 6:9-15](#), [Deuteronomy 32:35](#), [Hebrews 12:14-15](#)

CONCLUSION

Forgiveness is what happens in your heart before God. It's about letting go of a grievance and refusing to "answer and repay tit for tat." Even when we forgive someone, we might still long for justice, but in forgiveness, we shift the handling of justice to God and choose to trust his timing. Our ability to forgive is God's grace continuing to work in and through our lives, which also means, we do not go through the process of forgiveness on our own. What is one thing you learned about forgiveness that you want to keep with you, so you remember it in future moments when forgiveness is necessary? If there's someone you need to forgive, begin the process by talking it over with God in prayer.

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