

# FORGIVENESS

"For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions...And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has also forgiven you."

(Matt. 6:15-15; Eph. 4:32, NASB)

Sometimes we find it difficult to forgive others, yet Scripture clearly commands us to do so, because forgiveness of others allows for God's forgiveness to be extended to you. Still, some of us struggle to forgive the spouse that walked, the prodigal child who left home, cutting off all ties, the boss who withheld a "justly earned" promotion, the guy that cut us off this morning on our way to work. The list could be lengthy, but the cost we pay for an unforgiving spirit has a high ceiling.

Scripture does not allow for our "right" to failing to forgive. Unforgiveness doesn't hurt the perpetrator; it only hurts you, and in our refusal to let go of an offense it typically results in resentment, bitterness, hatred, hostility, and a whole host of other behaviors.

Forgiving doesn't mean what happened to you was acceptable and doesn't mean what was done needs to be denied or diminished in its effect(s). Forgiveness doesn't take away the consequences an offending party needs to face, but it does offer empathy for the offender and is often accompanied by an overwhelming sense of gratitude for the forgiveness we have been given by God.

Here at the Bridge, we understand that forgiving others (and sometimes ourselves) is often a difficult and uncomfortable process. We will help you acknowledge the hurt and pray with you in releasing this process and its pain at times to God.

*We're here to help, so, please, feel free to call us or email us at [care@thebridgersm.com](mailto:care@thebridgersm.com) and we will walk with you in your journey to forgiveness!*

