

5 2 WEEKS
OF GROWTH

Give it a Year
Week 30

WEEK 30

Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

Forgiveness...the hardest thing that we have to do as Christians. Yet it is one of the most powerful and freeing acts we can experience in our walk with Christ. It's never easy, but it's essential for living in the fullness of God's grace. When we forgive, we release ourselves from the prison of bitterness and anger, while reflecting the very heart of our Savior. A Savior who forgave us at the cost of His own life.

Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting what was done or excusing sin. Forgiveness means surrendering the hurt and the desire to seek revenge and handing it all over to God. It is choosing to trust His justice and His healing rather than holding on to the pain.

Jesus didn't just tell us to forgive, He showed us how. Jesus modeled perfect forgiveness on the cross when He said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). If the sinless Son of God could forgive those who crucified Him, well then, we are called to extend forgiveness in our own lives...even when it feels impossible.

So why do we need to forgive? Because holding on to unforgiveness is like carrying a heavy backpack filled with rocks. It slows us down, drains our strength, and keeps us from moving forward spiritually and emotionally. Unforgiveness then breeds bitterness. Bitterness not only poisons our hearts but can affect our relationships, our health, and even our closeness with God. And ultimately when we cling to all this bitterness, anger, and resentment, we give the enemy a foothold in our lives.

However, when we choose to forgive, we're not only obeying God, but we're also stepping into freedom. We can breathe better and we feel lighter when we release it all to God. It doesn't excuse the other person. Yet, in order for us to heal, we have to get to a point that we realize that we will never have control over what another person does. Whether that other person ever repents or even acknowledges their wrongdoing, doesn't matter. Forgiveness releases us from the chains of the past and opens the door to peace and healing. Forgiveness is more about our relationship with God and the freedom that only comes from Him and keeping our eyes securely placed on Him.

READ:

Matthew 6:14-15

Matthew 18:21-22

1 John 1:9

Hebrews 12:15

REFLECT:

- Is there someone in your life you need to forgive? What's been holding you back from doing it?
- How has holding on to unforgiveness affected my spiritual, emotional, or physical health?
- When have I experienced the freedom that comes from being forgiven by God or by another person?
- How can I daily reflect God's grace and forgiveness to those around me?

PRAYER:

Father God, thank You for the incredible gift of forgiveness through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Help me to remember the depth of mercy You've shown me, and give me the strength to extend that same grace to others. Lord, release me from the burden of bitterness and heal the wounds in my heart. Teach me to trust Your justice and timing, and let my life reflect the power of Your redeeming love. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.