



**“The Lord forgave you,
so you must forgive others”**

Colossians 3:13

The Key to Letting Go and Forgiving Others

Read: Luke 7:36-50, 8:1-3

In the gospel we hear the story of a sinful woman who interrupts a dinner party and washes Jesus’ feet. Instead of admonishing this woman, Jesus welcomes her and offers her forgiveness. He uses her as an example of God’s mercy.

Forgiving others is not always easy for us to do, especially when we feel like we’ve been wronged. Sometimes we prefer to be like the Pharisee in the gospel who complains about the woman. “If you only knew what so-and-so did, you wouldn’t forgive them either.” This isn’t a healthy attitude, and one Jesus rebukes. Instead, Jesus presents an example for forgiveness and peace.

First, you have to forgive those who’ve hurt you because God has forgiven you. Colossians 3:13 says, “Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.” Being a forgiving person means we must remember that God has first forgiven us and we need to extend that same mercy to others. Just like the woman, we don’t deserve to be forgiven, but God chose to do so out of love for us.

Second, you have to forgive those who’ve hurt you because resentment controls you. Ecclesiastes 7:9 says, “Only fools get angry quickly and hold a grudge.” Resentment makes you miserable and it controls you. Forgiveness enables us to let go of the past and open our hearts to love. As Jesus says, “the one who is forgiven little, loves little” (Luke 7:47). Forgiveness breeds love.

Third, you have to forgive those who’ve hurt you because you cannot receive what you aren’t willing to give. Jesus said in Matthew 6:14-15, “For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” Forgiveness is a two way street.

The path to personal peace begins with forgiveness. This is what Jesus shows us in the gospel. God does not want us to hold onto grudges or past wounds. They hinder our ability to be happy. When we forgive others we are able to “go in peace” (Luke 7:50).

Grow: Identify one person that you need to forgive. Pray for that person, offer them forgiveness and pray for God’s peace.