



# THE WAYS

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**Forgive...Again.** Just as God forgives us, heal relationships by extending forgiveness graciously and generously. Forgive everyone everything. Start by praying for those you resent or hate. Ask for every blessing you would want for the one you're struggling to forgive.

1. What is one experience you remember of being forgiven?

**READ Matthew 18:21-35**

1. Why do you think Peter is asking this question?
2. Does not the servant have the right to demand payment from his fellow servant?
3. Would God really withhold forgiveness from those who withhold forgiveness?

**Scenario:** A good friend seems like they have been in a bad mood for a couple of months now. They have a shorter fuse than ever before. It seems like little things set them off. On more than one occasion they have yelled at you or called you names, but it seems like each time they apologize. You are starting not to trust their apologies because you know it will happen again. At lunch, you make an innocuous comment to them and they jump down your throat...

1. What is your first reaction?
2. How many times do you feel like a friend can act like this before you draw the line?
3. How do you balance forgiveness and enabling? Do any other *Ways* connect?
4. How can repeated forgiveness be to the benefit of the forgiver?

We know that the one who has been forgiven much loves much, (Luke 7:47), but the one who has been forgiven much must forgive much also. You have been released from a debt that you can never pay back. What is more, you continually add to that debt by rebellion and sin, and God releases you again. *Forgive... Again* even when it feels like too many times or like too great a debt. *Forgive... Again* because you have been forgiven again. *Forgive... Again* because, in so doing, you draw close to Jesus by enacting His love for those around you.

**PRAY TOGETHER.**

(Pray that the Spirit would show you areas where you have withheld forgiveness.)

## DAILY Devotional

**MONDAY:** *READ:* Matt. 6:13. *THINK:* There are some pretty scary passages scattered throughout Scripture. This is one of them. If you refuse to forgive, you will not be forgiven. For a Christian, forgiveness is both received and given. They are intimately connected. You forgive because You are forgiven and if you refuse to forgive others, God will refuse to forgive you. Not words to take lightly. *PRAY:* that the Spirit shows you how deeply you are forgiven.

**TUESDAY:** *READ:* Eph. 4:31. *THINK:* Think about that list for a moment. Would you rather be bitter and angry or be released from those feelings? The call of a Christian life is a call to live in the way that is best for you. In the same way, forgiving is your best life. Would you rather hold on to frustration, hurt, and vengeance, or be released from them? *Forgive... Again.* *PRAY:* that God would root out any bitter or vengeful thoughts.

**WEDNESDAY:** *READ:* Col. 3:13. *THINK:* Doesn't a life with allowances sound good? It is a life where brokenness is known and sin is expected. The people around you have faults and so do you. *Forgive... Again* means that there is space to mess up, screw up, and to be faulty. Yes, we work towards perfection; but your spouse, your church, your kids, your friends, and yourself are all a work in progress. *PRAY:* for those who rub you the wrong way.

**THURSDAY:** *READ:* Luke 17:3-4. *THINK:* You probably already suspected this, but *Forgive...Again* is not the same as "be a doormat" or "let people sin." We are a community of people trying to live out God's ways. When your fellow Christian wrongs you, don't just ignore it. *Speak the Truth With Love* to them about it; and if they repent and ask forgiveness, *Forgive...Again.* *PRAY:* that God would help you forgive.

**FRIDAY:** *READ:* Isa. 43:25. *THINK:* Aren't you glad God remembers your sin's no more? As a kid, we learned "Forgive and Forget," yet somewhere along the way that sounded like letting people off too easy. When you *Forgive... Again* debts are not crossed out to be referred to later. They are blotted out as if they never existed. *PRAY:* the Spirit would give you a short memory for debts.

**SATURDAY:** *READ:* Col. 1:13-14. *THINK:* Without forgiveness, there is darkness. Without forgiveness, there is only the old you trapped in sin and moving towards death. What a joy it is that you are freed from that darkness. You live in the new Kingdom, the Kingdom of Jesus. Its law isn't "an eye for an eye." It's *Forgive...Again.* *PRAY:* the Spirit would make forgiveness second nature to you.