



---

# The Freedom of Forgiveness

April 14, 2024

Forgiveness is essential for growing and guarding any relationship.

**Forgiveness Defined (Biblical):** To let go, give up a debt, to pardon, to wipe the slate clean

**Deadly Myths of Forgiveness (World and Culture Says)**

- Forgiveness is weakness
- Forgiveness is letting an undeserving person win
- Forgiveness is condoning another's bad behavior
- Forgiveness is forgetting

**A Vision for Whole Relationships**

**Freedom to forgive without keeping score**

Matthew 18:21-22

*Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?" 22 Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times."*

Forgiveness is an **intentional decision** to not hold a **grudge** against another person, despite what they have done to you or how many times they have done it.

**Freedom to correct with grace and truth and forgive without constraint**

Luke 17:3-4

*"So watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying 'I repent,' you must forgive them."*

Forgiveness is a deliberate act of **love**, **mercy**, and **grace**.

## Freedom to forgive as we have been forgiven

Colossians 3:13

*"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."*

Ephesians 4:32

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

**Forgiveness is not only hard work it is truly heart work!**

### The Reality and Reasons for Broken Relationships

1. **Forgetfulness**: Not remembering the hope and freedom we enjoy as a child of God because of Jesus' forgiveness of our sins.
2. **Farsightedness**: Magnifying the sin of another against us while minimizing our own sinful words, actions, and attitudes.
3. **Hard-heartedness**: A stubborn refusal to take God and His Word seriously and apply it to our life.

### The Way Forward to Healing, Hope, and Wholeness

- Freely forgive because you are forgiven.
- Freely forgive because He is faithful.
- Freely forgive because we are all flawed and fall short.
- Freely forgive because it brings freedom.

*"When you release the wrongdoer from the wrong, you cut a malignant tumor out of your inner life. You set a prisoner free, but you discover that the real prisoner was yourself."*

- Lewis Smedes, Pastor and Author